A SCIENTIFIC MAN AND THE BIBLE

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A SCIENTIFIC MAN AND THE BIBLE

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A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

BY

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TO

MY FIRST AND BEST FRIEND

GUIDE OF MY YOUTH

INSPIRATION AND STRENGTH

OF MY MATURER YEARS

AND CROWN OF MY APPROACHING

THREE SCORE YEARS AND TEN

MY MOTHER

"O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid."—Psalm 116.

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PREFACE

The occasion of the writing of these brief chapters was the request of the Editor of The Sunday School Times, Mr. Charles G. Trumbull, for a rather full statement of my personal experience in coming to my present faith, to be followed by a simple setting forth of the great doctrines ever held inviolate by the historic Christian Church. I undertook this with the co-operation of my Bible class in Baltimore, making these topics the subjects of our weekly Sunday morning studies.

My readers may miss many important references under each heading, but I hope the statements will be found to be simple and understandable, and that the hearts of men and women, here and there, who are looking for light, may be touched.

I would remind all my fellow-Christians that when we confess Christ as our Saviour we do not arrive at a settled position, but receive from him the implantation of a new life of endless growth, a growth conditioned upon the daily due use of the various means of grace, among which the most important are a daily appropriating use of the Word of God, definite

prayer, a service calculated to bring men to Christ, the Lord's Supper, and the recognition of the mission of the Holy Spirit in this present dispensation, especially as set forth in the Epistles.

A Spirit-filled Christian saturated with the Word soon finds that those who reject the Gospel, however eminent in their professional attainments, really have no conception of the true nature of our faith and are fundamentally ignorant of the Word.

May our Father bless this humble effort to magnify his Word and the name of his Son.

Howard A. Kelly

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I

HOW I CAME TO MY PRESENT FAITH

I

HOW I CAME TO MY PRESENT FAITH

IN THE economy of grace it is by no means a necessity, yet it is a distinct advantage and a blessing, to have godly ancestors. My mother comes from a devoutly religious New England family on her father's side and is of Quaker descent on her mother's side. My mother's father, the Rev. A. B. Hard, of Arlington, Vt., used to say with Cowper, "We boast an ancestry passed into the skies." His love of the Bible showed itself in the deep emotion with which he spoke of it. As a small boy I used to observe with wonder his eyes filled with tears as he talked of it before others who felt but little interest in the subject. His sister, Jane Hard, married the Rev. Henry Coit, of New York, who was for a time Rector of St. Andrew's, Wilmington, Del. The son of Jane Hard and Henry Coit was the founder of St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H., and its headmaster until his death. My grandfather, a youthful graduate of the Theological Seminary of Alexandria, Va., was invited by his brother-in-law in 1827 to preach his first sermon in St. Andrew's pulpit. It was then that the daughter

of a slave-holding state met the young New England divine, brought up in New England ideals and trained in its clear and simple faith. My grandmother used to relate to her daughters a tale of their betrothal. When she accepted his earnest plea for her hand, to her surprise and confusion, his joy found expression in the words "Let us pray." He drew her to her knees beside him, fervently thanking our Heavenly Father and beseeching his guidance.

On my father's mother's side are the families of Kuhl and Hillegas with an unbroken record of born, married, died and buried in Philadelphia for over 200 years. Among them was my father's great grandfather, Michael Hillegas, the first Treasurer of the United States. My father's father's family came to Philadelphia from the north of Ireland in the eighteenth century. Two brothers, Thomas and Philip Kelly, converted in Ireland to Methodism, found it difficult to remain at home. They sought their fortunes in the New World which gave them liberty of conscience and material prosperity.

Like most boys, I owe my real start in life to my mother, still living, who began to teach me the Bible, standing at her knee, as soon as I could dimly grasp the simple words and before I could read. How well I recall measuring out

the verses of the second chapter of Matthew with deliberate childish intonation, "Now — when — Jesus — was — born — in — Bethlehem — of — Judea — in — the — days — of Herod — the — king — behold — there — came — Wise — Men — from — the — East," and so on. My first of a long series of Biblical puzzles was the command of John the Baptist to the Pharisees to "bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance"; I could not figure out how fruits could be meat!

During the Civil War while my father, still living, was at the front with the 118th Pennsylvania Volunteers, we lived in old Chester, Delaware County, Pa., to be near the grandparents and aunts, and we attended old St. Paul's Church. There a devoted teacher, Miss Mattie Smith, trained us children in the kindergarten, and the habit of church-going was formed and the mental attitude of reverence was adopted from our elders under the ministry of a dignified, earnest, long-time incumbent, the Rev. Henry Brown. Painted on the semicircle over the chancel in old St. Paul's in impressive capitals, ever since graven on my memory, stood the motto: "Holiness Becometh Thine House, O Lord, Forever." I can still recall times of earnest thought on life, God, and eternity at five or six years of age. In 1863 or '64, father,

writing from the front, sent me a verse from the Bible, which carries me back to the reading of his letter: "My son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

It was here, too, in Chester, that my mother detected and diligently fostered a strong inborn love of natural history inherited from herself, which expressed itself first in what I called "bugology." My ardent hope was to discover some new species, but I was depressed by the thought that all might be found and described before I could sally forth into the field. Dr. John Le Conte, the great coleopterist of the Academy of Natural Sciences, visiting us in Chester about that time, bade mother assure me that some would surely be left for the next generation.

When the war ended we returned to Philadelphia, and new friends and school life brought in fresh interests; I have ever since in retrospect gratefully recalled a brief session in the Rev. Mr. Shin's school on Mt. Vernon Street, aided by his fine wife and daughter. At ten years of age, my father entered me under the tutelage of the widely known Scotch schoolmaster, John W. Faires, head of the Classical Institute on Dean between Locust and Spruce Streets. Dr. Faires was a fine, capable dominie of the ancient regime who ruled his little king-

dom with a kindly justice, graduating into friendliness with the two upper classes. His ultimate appeal in cases of flagrant violations of discipline was the rattan, or "birch oil," as we called it. The doctor kept a salutary bundle of his rods in sight and at intervals selected a new one with careful testings as to limberness and to exclude cracks. Most of us deserved all the tannings (never too severe) which we got from time to time with immediate manifest beneficial results. Dr. Faires was assisted by one or other of his sons and by William Craig of Norristown, a scholar and a man of fine Christian character, to whose precepts and example we owed much. I could linger long over a host of boyish experiences, pranks, and the friendships of those days (1868-73), as could hundreds of other Philadelphians of earlier and later years still living, but this is more a spiritual biography.

Commingled with a natural, healthy school life and the temptations and fights common to boys of all ages, I was ever conscious of the call to yield life more faithfully to higher things, and here I began, in the fifth Latin class in 1869, the life-long habit of carrying a New Testament or some portion of Scripture in my pocket. I venture to commend this as a good practice for all boys; a portion of the Bible on

one's very person constitutes a sort of a badge of membership or a profession, a safeguard in fact in temptation, and affords opportunities of storing up bits of Scripture in memory and so of realizing the promise implied in "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee," as well as the cleansing of the young man's way. A habit formed later was that of writing out a verse of Scripture on a piece of paper in the morning and tucking it into the vest pocket to be taken out for occasional meditation. Let me skip a couple of decades to recall an incident of my return from visiting my family at Spring Lake, N. J., one summer. On the train I found Dr. George Faught of Philadelphia, an old but hitherto only superficial acquaintance, and we fell into a conversation, when suddenly, as a sort of a test, he asked, "Where is the Kingdom of Heaven?" I put my finger into my vest pocket and hooked out my slip and handed it to him; on it was written in Greek, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you,"—it was my text for the day! This started a long and profitable Christian friendship, since Faughty, as we called him, had an extraordinary custom of making minute analyses of the Word and was also its champion and doughty defender against all comers.

The instructions of a faithful mother, the constant companion of my childhood, ripened into the clearer perceptions of the truth and the convictions of boyhood, until in about the year 1871 I was confirmed by Bishop Stevens under the pastorate of the Rev. Richard Newton, the widely known evangelical preacher of the Church of the Epiphany at Fifteenth and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. How fine was the care Dr. Newton gave to the preparation of his young "catechumens"; we attended his classes and each was given as well a little book to study, in which to write answers to questions testing the knowledge and right understanding of the Scriptures. In those days we had weekly prayer-meetings in which all took part.

It was in those days, too, that it seemed that outside of the familiar channels new and extraordinary fountains of grace and blessing were being opened up in such novel procedures as week-day Bible readings and parlor gatherings. W. S. Rainsford, who (later, I believe) was the means of starting a great revival in Toronto, arrived fresh from an athletic pre-eminence in the crew at Oxford University, Eng., and held afternoon readings in the Sunday-school room of the Epiphany; Sarah Smiley of Mohonk, N. Y., once a Quaker but now a high church Episcopalian and full of grace, talked to parlor

groups in West Philadelphia on faith; Hannah Whitall Smith gave Bible talks on DeLancey Place near Nineteenth Street—all of these I attended with my mother with profit and an ever-increasing sense of the riches stored up in the Bible. The Spirit of God was evidently moving in our midst, as in other communities, and awakening a fresh interest in God's living Word, everywhere re-creating and refreshing the spirits of men.

College life at the University of Pennsylvania, 1873-1882, first in Arts and then in Medicine, brought precious life-long friendships. Definiteness in the Christian life was greatly assisted if not openly and actively promoted by the example of such teachers as Allen and Muhlenberg in Greek, Jackson in Latin, Kendall, and especially the warm-hearted recently lamented Robert Ellis Thompson, teacher of Political Economy. It was somewhere about this time, when in Arts, 1875 or 1876, that Moody and Sankey came to Philadelphia early in their evangelistic labors in the East to hold their meetings in the old freight depot of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Thirteenth and Market Streets, filled with twelve thousand souls. This was the biggest crowd I had ever seen and long remained my standard of the measure of a vast multitude. Both stirred me deeply,—

Moody's simple, earnest, effective Biblical exhortations, and Sankey's earnest singing to the accompaniment of his organ; here, too, I first saw men moved to seek salvation in the inquiry rooms. An odd circumstance impressed me with Moody's unquenchable zeal for souls, in that he walked through the crowd right over the tops of the benches to reach some of those who held up their hands for help. It must have been the following year that I attended Moody's meetings in Baltimore, held in the Mt. Vernon Methodist Church. Here I went back into the inquiry room and met him personally, and received a copy of his "Way and the Word." He had not yet learned the great need of the follow-up work characterizing his meetings on his return years later when I was living here, a part of the Johns Hopkins Hospital and University.

I entered the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania in 1877, not because I loved medicine as such, but because anatomy and sundry associated scientific studies seemed the closest approach to natural history in which it was hard to make a living. Four years in medicine brought delightful associations with eminent scientists—Joseph Leidy, Edward Drinker Cope, and Harrison Allen. Cope I had known long before this as a teacher and

patron, through my interest in the reptile kingdom.

The attempt to cultivate both medicine and science proved too much for the frail flesh, so I had to go West for the year 1880-81 as a cowboy on the plains of Colorado, on the O Z Ranch in Elbert County, to win back my ability to sleep. Riding a broncho, and with flapping saddle bags carrying my drugs, I had a most valuable experience on the ranch, coupled with some months in the mines in Grizzly Gulch, at the head of the Chalk Creek Canyon some eight thousand feet in elevation. A half blind man named French and I drove a good herd of cattle up the Ute Pass, around Pike's Peak, and across the South Park to be slaughtered for the miners. While batching part of the time in Colorado Springs, I entered the postal service (not by any formal appointment) and carried the United States Star Route pony mail when the regular carrier was sick,—from Colorado Springs up to the Divide and back.

My cowboy friends, with whom I lived on the ranches and foregathered at the spring and fall round-ups, were many of them aggressive professed atheists, saturated with the writings of Tom Paine, Bob Ingersoll, and Kersey Graves. How many earnest conversations there were about "religion," especially with one dear

friend, William Bates, the postmaster at O Z (so named after a cowbrand)! Aside from the constant recourse to my Bible, I found Nelson on "Infidelity" a great comfort in my lonely emergency. Nelson himself had been an unbeliever, but had been won to a Christian faith by the obvious fulfilment of the prophecies touching the ancient cities Babylon, Nineveh, and Tyre.

In the midst of the cold and lonely winter far out on the plains, I had a never-to-be-forgotten experience one night during one of Colorado's three-day blizzards while I was bedfast with snow blindness from the glare of the sun on the snow striking unprotected eyes; it was in William Bates' house at the postoffice. I think that one can hardly speak of a matter so profoundly personal and sacred without considerable reluctance, but I could not well pen even an outline of a spiritual autobiography and not refer to this chief event in life. There came as I sat propped up in my bed an overwhelming sense of a great light in the room and of the certainty of the near presence of God, lasting perhaps a few minutes and fading away, leaving a realization and a conviction never afterwards to be questioned in all the vicissitudes of life whatever they might be, a certainty above and beyond the processes of human reasoning. I

avoid speaking of a "vision" as too threadbare and as savoring perhaps of some degree of enthusiasm (in the old sense of the word) and of unreality. I add with shame that this has not had the transforming effect upon my life which it ought to have had.

Returning from Colorado, I took my medical degree in 1882 and entered the Episcopal Hospital in Kensington, Philadelphia, for a residency of over a year. Here at last my real medical education began in the dispensaries and in the wards under excellent and always kindly and sympathetic clinical chiefs, men of reputation, such as Morris Lewis, Louis Starr, J. M. Anders, in medicine, and C. B. Nancrede, John Hooker Packard, and William S. Forbes, in surgery. I found a particularly congenial friend in Andrew K. Minich, chief of the dispensary service, who took a keen interest in his young protegés. After I left the hospital, Dr. Minich continued his interest in aiding and abetting my surgical aspirations in every way, circulating the report that I "did a Cesarean section every morning before breakfast"! I had a chance to show my appreciation of his great kindnesses some years later, when (in about 1890) he was taken with that terrible disease, cancer of the throat (he had been a great smoker), from which he died after

months of suffering. He welcomed my visits and we talked of things eternal and of the faith in Christ. I was living in Baltimore, and, when I could not visit him, I adopted the plan of writing regularly; in order to lessen his efforts I bought a Bible and clipped the verses and passages referred to, and pasted them in the letters, making the references easy and placing the responsibility upon the Word itself. Dr. Minich left no doubt as to his deep interest and appreciation, but I was unable to see him near the last, when tired nature gradually drew the veil over the senses before the great change.

The Rev. David Lovejoy, M.D., and later Francis M. Taitt, now of Chester, Pa., incumbent in the new St. Paul's, were warm friends during my hospital residency. Hospital experiences drew me into intimate touch with the problems of suffering humanity and revealed the priceless gratitude of the poor when treated with affectionate consideration; this was the final touch necessary to convert all my interests to my profession, no longer merely a means of livelihood, but a shining path of service replete with rich spiritual rewards. I owe to the poor and the mill workers of Kensington and all others since who have trusted me so unreservedly through life the rich rewards of joy and satisfaction the practice of surgery has

brought me these past forty-three years.

On leaving the hospital, I cast my lot with the mill workers of Kensington, many of whom had been my patients in the hospital, quitting my home some five miles distant in the heart of the city; and to their patience with and their confidence in the aspiring young doctor are due my early experiences and such measure of success as I have attained. The greatest fruitage of this work, continued for some eight years in this mill district, was the advent upon the field of my sister Esther, now Mrs. R. R. P. Bradford, who soon also abandoned her down-town home and came to live among her Kensington parishioners and so began that model Christian social work in which the all-pervading, dominating force is the evangelical message while the physical needs of the people are met as well throughout the year. This is the widely known Lighthouse, on West Lehigh Avenue near the hospital, with its great associated activities, now maintained by a large corps of Christian workers and headed also by my brother-in-law, Mr. Robert Bradford.

In 1888 I was appointed, together with Dr. Barton Cooke Hirst, to an associate professorship in obstetrics in my *alma mater,* where I officiated for a year under the incubus of attending to a large practice and doing heavy

responsible surgical work in Kensington and at the same time preparing and delivering a first course of lectures, in a lecture room before a great crowd of students, at a place a full hour and a half distant, on a subject not especially congenial, while an aspirant for the promised chair of gynecological surgery shortly to be vacated by Professor William Goodell.

Meantime, in 1889, came the call to Baltimore, through the advocacy of my good friend, later Sir William Osler, to participate in the opening up of the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical School, in the chair of gynecological surgery. My department was fortunate in the early assistants who came to my aid: Hunter Robb, the first resident, W. W. Russell, Albert Stavely, Benjamin Schenck, Stephen Rushmore, Curtis F. Burnam, Henry Hutchins, Ernest Stokes, Thomas S. Cullen, Guy L. Hunner, John Sampson, John Clark, and Max Broedel, our distinguished artist. We all took to work, to investigations, and to writing papers on surgical subjects, as ducks to water, in our efforts to magnify our department and creditably to carry on the Hospital Reports and the Bulletins. Our Medical School then seemed to us to differ from other schools, not necessarily so much in the personnel of men like Welch, Osler, Halsted, and Hurd, and many of the fine early

residents and teachers, as in a certain pervasive spiritual atmosphere, in the generous, kindly appreciation each entertained for the others, coupled with a proper pride and an abiding interest in the constructive work being done in the various fields of medicine, and with the prospects which loomed up for the future. There was a notable lack of jealousy, while a rare harmony reigned in the halls of the new model hospital endowed by Johns Hopkins and planned by John S. Billings, chief of the Library of the Surgeon General in Washington, D. C., and international authority in hospital construction. We unconsciously afforded another illustration of the value of the maxim, "In honor preferring one another," for where love is, there happiness and progress are sure to find their congenial dwelling-place.

But yet for myself in the midst of these delightful external conditions, internally all was not going so well, for the spirit was not being duly nourished and so could not duly grow. A destructive analysis of the Holy Scriptures called the Higher Criticism of the Bible, imported from intellectual Germany, was sweeping England, and our own America seemed only too eager to fall into line. The effect of the criticism was to knock out the one great prop of faith by subdividing the Bible into in-

numerable fragments, or perhaps more literally by tearing it to pieces, while questioning its authenticity and challenging its authority on every page with the rejection of many vital parts as the myths of a nomadic people. Miracles were discredited because contrary to the laws of nature, and with them logically went the Virgin Birth of Christ, his Deity, his Atoning Death, his Resurrection, and his present mediatorial office at the right hand of the Majesty on High. The climax of this method was exhibited to the eye in the bizarre polychrome or "rainbow Bible" issued by a friend from my own university, in which each shade of color indicated redaction and a different authorship.

This attitude of a group of exceedingly capable, often personally attractive men, and generally highly trained linguistic scholars, generated such a feeling of uncertainty that multitudes felt that there was no longer any assurance that whenever and wherever one might open the Bible looking for spiritual food one would not find chaff. So widespread a distress only served to demonstrate the imperative demand of the human heart for an absolutely dependable message, in so vital a topic as salvation from sin, our universal disease. Coincident with this neo-critical development

and its vast literature, in the United States there was observable also a profound disturbance of our young people everywhere by two curious phobias which I must dwell upon at some other time, namely, the dread of being called "unscientific," or "narrow." I think that in some degree these bogies still survive in our colleges.

The destructive criticism, however injurious, could not be lightly brushed aside, and the grave questions were: How far would it go in undoing and rejecting all the past as worthless, and what was the best method of dealing with some of its obvious errors? The answer to these queries constituted so important a landmark in my life, and I doubt not in the lives of many, that I linger at this juncture.

The weakest point immediately observable in my opponent's armor was the ruthless warfare being waged on the Gospel of John, alleged to be a product of a later century and another author, thus annihilating its authenticity and all spiritual value. Now, I knew more about, and in some degree better understood, this Gospel than the others. A long and reverent study of its teachings and the harmonies sounding from its pages, together with the comforting assurances it brought to the hungry spirit, had made its absolute reliability so obvious that to set it

aside as a later artificial product put a far greater strain upon my credulity than its acceptance at its own valuation as the writing of John the evangelist and the living oracle of God's Holy Spirit graciously given to our perishing humanity. As I touched one after another of the many golden chords of God's purposes running through it, each sounded out as clearly and as consistently as though the Gospel had been written solely to develop that one theme, and each called forth its responsive harmonies in all other parts of the sacred Scriptures. The conviction, therefore, of its absolute veracity and dependableness remained irresistible. This position of the critic has been abandoned, so the wisdom of this wisest of all ages reaches the climax of discovering that the Gospel of Luke was written by Luke, and John was written by John! Had we been a little wiser at the time in following more closely the work of the archeologist in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Palestine, and farther east, we might have noticed that the spades of the excavators from Layard and Rawlinson down through the decades were rapidly bringing data to the surface to prove irrefutably the accuracy of Biblical narratives.

I think that I am not wrong when I aver that the attitude of many Higher Critics has been

that Biblical statements may easily be an error; or, if any statement does not appeal to one or can by ingenuity be explained in some way to its discredit, it may deservedly be held under suspicion or even rejected. On the other hand, all declarations in other ancient works must necessarily be authoritative, correct, and worthy of acceptation, and therefore sufficient to prove the inaccuracy of our Bible. The right rule and attitude of mind is just the reverse.

In my perplexity in meeting this danger, I was also aware of the vagaries and diverse and contradictory conjectures of this Bible-wrecking cult and of its many autoschediastic asseverations. I recalled some of the answers already given by history. For example, at one time it was asserted that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch because writing was almost unknown in his time. If, therefore, writing was excluded, the only other available source of information must be tradition by the word of mouth, and we all know how garbled that may become in a few centuries. As I looked about me for a weapon, grace guided my hand to the only effective one, the living Word. Like Pilgrim of old, when beaten down by Apollyon and at his wits' end, his fingers clutched "the sword of the Spirit" and the victor was vanquished, so, weapon in hand, I laid lustily about me and

the arch enemy soon melted into his own limbo. The effort was crude, but it was effectual; I opened a Concordance and looked up "word," to see what the Bible claimed for itself and to test it out. Manifestly everywhere it claimed in all its parts to be the very literal Word of God to men, and so I accepted it and so I applied it. The result was that difficulties began to vanish and supernal harmonies came in to sweep the chords. Tested in this way, the Bible worked, and from that day on I became as a Christian philosopher, a member of the great school of pragmatists, for pragmatism defines practicability as the supreme test of any doctrine; it only asks, Does it work well? I am thankful that my emancipation took place in this wise through the Word itself, and that I only became more familiar at a later date with the notable works of the archeologists and with the papyri of the Fayum Desert and Oxyrhynchus.

Is not the battle thus always but an exemplification of the sixth of Ephesians where in the Christian panoply there is but a single weapon, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and "all prayer"? Also "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," and that testimony ever is and forever will be to the sacrificial

blood of the Lamb of God which alone can cleanse our sins, the fulfilment of all the prophetic sacrifices through all the ages. And the word of their testimony ever derives all its authority from and conforms to this perfect, completed, written Word, earth's one great heritage of the ages. Well may we cry out of thankful hearts with the Psalmist, "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it." With an authoritative Bible in hand difficulties either melted away or became inconsequential. I began to go forward, fed from my Father's table, and since then "have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

For some years in the nineties and beyond I met often with the local assembly of the Plymouth Brethren, to whom I owe much for their manifest love of the Bible and their clear teachings and zeal. What Bible student today is not thankful for the labors and writings of J. N. Darby, C. H. Mackintosh, and F. W. Grant? Mr. Samuel Ridout (as my teacher) was most patient and never complained of a pupil often overcome with drowsiness at the end of a day of hard work.

He who enters the Christian life and hopes to grow must work; and no living man may delegate his life's service to priest, minister, or other emissary.

My first impulse in the nineties was to attack our distressing Baltimore social problems as one means of expressing my Christian citizenship, so I studied, investigated, then attacked the judicial legalization (utterly contrary to law) of prostitution in Baltimore, a shameful procedure by which our courts were continually disgraced, our police force debauched, the people generally corrupted, and virtue held cheap, while the lives of the poor victims of man's contemptible cowardice in shirking his obligations to build up a home were unspeakable. Continual agitation of this question like that of other evils roused the dormant public conscience and resulted in the closing of all immoral resorts under our zealous Christian governor, Philips Lee Goldsborough. Immediate improvement followed, but the full benefits of the act will only be realized when Christian men and women are willing to go forth to serve this class as our Lord himself served.

A warm friendship and ten years of delightful service with the Rev. Dr. William Waters Davis, the protagonist of the Lord's Day in Maryland, began about 1914. It would take a volume to describe our happy experiences as we traversed the state and visited every county in Maryland, speaking in every county seat and in innumerable other places, from three or four,

to as many as ten times of a Sunday, working tandem to compass the more numerous engagements. My big-hearted colleague taught me many lessons in effective speaking, in zeal for a cause, and in fertility in expedients and organization. One of my themes was the Christian's right use of the Lord's Day, but usually I preferred to urge the need of a sturdy civic righteousness, or the duty of the Christian to saturate himself with the Word of God and *pari passu* to serve. But back of all efficient service must be a far deeper knowledge of the Bible, and a constant subjection to its disciplinary corrective precepts and judgments.

I have finally become convinced that excellent and necessary and praiseworthy as are all the varied activities in the promotion of good works according as they are more or less demonstrably Christian, and important as it may well be that Christians should aid, abet, and encourage them, as they carry with them in all their services a savor of Christ's presence, there remained yet one thing still more fundamental in which I desired to enlist my services for the remainder of my life. I desired to exert every energy to arouse Christians to their need of a wider and deeper knowledge of the Word of God and so to draw them to a closer daily walk with Christ who is one with that

Word. To this end, for some years, it has been my effort to establish well-trained Bible teachers, forming classes wherever openings could be found, with the objective of deepening the spiritual lives of Christians and then of inciting the members of the classes themselves in turn to become new centers of the diffusion of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At present, Miss Grace Hamilton of the Biblical Seminary in New York is deeply engaged in this evangelical interdenominational work. It is our fond hope, about, I believe, to be realized, that a revival in a quiet way is beginning in our midst among our young people,—in a measure corresponding to the great work now under way in Atlanta and the South, and showing signs of springing up shortly in many parts of our country, "when the winter is past, . . . and flowers appear on the earth the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

May this brief biography serve to teach these simple lessons:

1. That our Father is exceedingly gracious and always waiting to lead us in paths he has before ordained that we should walk in.

2. That our Father shows the same infinite patience with us as individuals today that he manifested of old in the long centuries when

his people were in captivity, in the wilderness and in the land.

3. That the crying need of the world today is a more intimate, thorough knowledge of the Word of God, for the Bible is in reality the rarest of books.

4. That while many good works are excellent, the supreme opportunity of life is to know Christ, and ever to know yet better him who is the express image and the effulgence of the glory of the Father, and "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Please permit an affectionate appeal in this addendum: Fellow Christians, you who have families, hold family prayers daily and read and discuss some Scripture in the family at least twice a day, for the reward is a rich one.

Alas, this review of my life step by step, for the first time, lays bare such woeful deficiencies and stirs up such keen regrets over wasted opportunities, that I feel like one who has been sent to thrust the scythe into a harvest field rich with golden grain, and who returns in the evening to the Master of the Manor to lay at his feet but a scant handful.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom, and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

II

THE WHOLE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD

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LET me state at once that I am sure that the Bible is the Word of God, with an assurance greater than all other convictions directing my course in this brief earthly pilgrimage. Above all those maxims regulating the practical relations of life born of experience, above those logical deductions from philosophical and scientific premises, I place the clear light of truth shining from the pages of the Bible. The Bible, the Word of God, is my one great guerdon on my homeward journey.

But some one suggests, "You mean, of course, parts of the Bible, omitting those Old Testament myths of a nomadic people and allowing, too, for the haze which must envelop the traditions of early ages." No, emphatically, I am happy to say I do not have to pare and trim and make exceptions and allowances; constant use has taught me to accept the whole Bible as God's Word just as I took the letter received today as coming direct and without interpolations from my mother in Philadelphia.

Do not err by thinking that by this I mean to offer myself as a ready and efficient inter-

preter of all parts of the Word, or to suggest that there are no lingering difficulties to be solved. I am happy, however, to recall that with time and an ever-growing familiarity with its rich contents and their sweet harmonies, many knotty problems that once appeared insoluble have already melted like morning mists, while the few that remain in no wise impede the sun's rays as they flash from heaven to earth. My belief is not the offspring of a sudden resolution, nor is it due to any determination to take the easiest course or to choose the lesser of two evils,—a course rational perhaps but certainly not honoring the Word. Rather is it the outcome of the steady growth of a lifetime and a little knowledge of the Word always being added to and ever enlarging the horizon of life, continually revealing things not known to those who do not feed daily upon the Word, and yet clear as crystal to him who comes as a child to learn from an all-wise loving Father.

This positive belief and clear conviction, however, have not been held without due consideration of the positions of opponents to any such confidence in the absolute authority of the Word. At one time, indeed, some thirty-five years ago, I paid close attention to the pronunciamentos of sundry critics, and was not a little distressed and disturbed, until I found the

key which let me out of the barren country where I had been disconsolately and vainly wandering, through a little wicket gate into a pleasant garden where flowers decked the sward and the trees bore all manner of pleasant fruits and the people of the land lived in peace, untroubled by the turmoil round about.

It happened on this wise. Finding I was getting nowhere, or rather that I was becoming spiritually mired by the criticisms, I determined at last to take the brave course of settling my difficulties, like an honest scientist, by treating the Bible as I would any branch of science. If I propose to study botany, or astronomy, or geology, or microscopy, I take an accredited textbook and note the rules, and proceed with my studies, always with the presumption that the rules are right, and that the book is a dependable guide; I resolutely shelve any preconceived notions of my own, and I apply the rules honestly to the matters arising for investigation. In this way, step by step, I make progress and gradually acquire a real knowledge of the particular science, ever finding myself also in hearty accord with other scientists working in the same field. If the subject happens to be mathematics, my elective, alas, at college, and my weakest point, I would never think, while still in the kindergarten of this

greatest of all the sciences, of knitting my brows over all the puzzling symbols and appalling equations so abundant in the later pages, and at once rejecting the book, declaring that it is a piece of blessed foolishness, simply because I fail utterly to understand it all.

And yet, some years ago I persuaded a friend at least to read the Bible and to give it a chance to speak for itself. He came back in a few weeks, with the remark that he had read it and could make no sense out of it. I asked, "What did you read?" and he replied, "Revelation"!

I reached, then, this point, "I will see carefully just what the Bible says of itself, and will accept its own dictum as my working hypothesis in studying it."

My discovery was as wonderful as it was simple and obvious. I found that God was named countless thousands of times in our Scriptures, and that their whole atmosphere is that of Heaven stooping down to speak to earth, that literally and emphatically it is declared that "the Lord spake" upwards of five hundred times, that men heard and received his messages, and that he gave audible commands and men obeyed them. To ascertain more directly its claims, I looked up "W-O-R-D," and found it about a thousand times. Why, there is no book in the world so vocal as the Bible!

He also who gave us the Book identified himself with it as the creative word. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth . . . for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Psa. 33); and "By the word of God the heavens were of old" (2 Pet. 3). Men of old, with a more limited Scripture and with fewer advantages, certainly appreciated their blessings. Job declared, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food"! Would that we today felt as he did about it! Read now Psalm 119, to see how God's law, word, testimonies, counsels, judgments, and precepts were regarded some three thousand years ago. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! . . . The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

Unto Isaiah God said, "I am the Lord thy God . . . and I have put my words into thy mouth." Or what more emphatic than the Lord's solemn asseveration: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my

mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

In the New Testament I noted Christ's declarations, "Scripture cannot be broken," and "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5), as well as his solemn affirmation regarding his own words (Mark 13). Our Lord's weapon of defense against our arch enemy, Satan, was, "It is written," "It is written," "It is written"; then graciously to us, too, the Holy Spirit has given the same impregnable Scriptures he used, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." The Spirit also declares that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable" (2 Tim. 3).

And lastly, but chiefest of all reasons, Christ the Son of God is himself the Word, which started to speak of him when God said, "Let there be light," and resumed again in the new creation when "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God," and to insure the identification, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

My course, the only sensible one, was thus made plain; so, like Christian smitten down by Apollyon, my hand grasped the sword of the

Word and Apollyon and his hosts scurried away for a time. Trusting it as a child, I applied it, and it worked, and it has continued to work ever since. In any real sense in which any Christian is a child of God, it is because he has been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

Right at this juncture let me add a greatly needed word of caution. This heavenly Word will not yield its sweets unless it is handled with due reverence. He who would "treat the Bible like any other book," as men so glibly, and it seems almost flippantly, say, would better never open it, for he will find no food, no treasure,—the Spirit will have left its pages. Let this fundamental rule be graven on the tablets of the heart, "Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord" (Psa. 115), "That thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always" (Deut. 14).

With that fruitful experience of testing the Word at its own valuation, reiterated as it has been all down the centuries, I became then and there a philosopher in a new sense, a Christian

pragmatist, for "pragmatism" is the hall mark of the thing that is practical and efficient; it is based on the fundamental dictum of C. S. Peirce, friend of William James who exploited it, that "every truth has practical consequences and these are the test of its truth." Let me now ask, with the utmost confidence, where in this wide world is there any teaching like our Bible in its "practical consequences"? Job's friend Elihu went to that school, for he cried out, "Who teacheth like him"? What authority, what other power is there given among men which when applied with an honest heart transforms the nature, ennobles the prostitute to love holiness and become an angel of mercy, raises the beggar and the sot from the gutter to set them among the princes of the earth?

But as I write, this word "pragmatism" begins to echo through my mind as something strangely familiar; did not someone of yore, even before Peirce's day, say something like this? I have it, in a writing more than eighteen centuries ago by another great pragmatist—this most excellent injunction, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," and yet farther back a great Rabbi whose name was Wonderful, Counsellor, extended this invitation, "Come and see"; are not these last two ancient pregnant sentences the very sublimation

of pragmatism, our most modern philosophy? Is it not, too, but the supreme wisdom and experience of the world in its daily affairs?

Where is there in this wide universe a teaching like Christ's which when applied to the woes of this sin-distraught world dispels misery and composes all human difficulties, makes loving friends of nations but recently bent on mutual destruction, and sets up a kingdom of righteousness and establishes standards of judgment tempered by mercy? We may ask and ask again, and we may seek, as many have done for a lifetime, but it is all in vain, for but one answer is possible, namely, that our God speaks authoritatively through the Bible, that textbook of heavenly therapeutics, with an ever-present power to heal and to compose all the vexed world's disorders, and that nowhere else does he so speak; and that all his speech is identified with Christ, his Son, who appears unmistakably here.

Christians who have journeyed far and who have taken God's Word as their viaticum, their daily food, must often be conscious of the impossibility of presenting adequately the full grounds of their faith to an inquirer. For example, as a parallel, how can I convincingly make clear to one who has never known love, why and how much I love my mother? How

can one in a few brief sentences tell him who has always turned to his own way, and followed the desires of his own mind, why we love our Friend and Kinsman Redeemer, our daily Guide and Counsellor? Such reasoning from daily experiences and personal contacts is readily held valid in our estimations of men; then why not, I ask, in an appreciation of God and his Word? An argument of this kind, by its very nature unpresentable, is cumulative, and keeps on growing until wrought into the very fibers of one's being, until its denial becomes equivalent to the very negation of life. It is this that oftenest brings conviction to those who may be dumb when asked for any reasoned presentation of the grounds of their faith.

I know that the Bible is the Word of God because in it I learn of his Holy Spirit of whom Christ said, "Ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you," while the world cannot receive the Spirit of Truth "because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him," wherein lies one of the paradoxes of the Christian life. The world is settled in its conviction, upholding the axiom that only "seeing is believing." The Christian triumphantly exclaims, "Nay, my brother, in the realm of the affections and in the commerce of the Spirit, always, believing is

seeing!" And he turns gratefully to his Teacher as he recalls the promise, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." We are thus dealing, my brother, my sister, with that greatest of gifts received of the Father after the ascension of Christ to take his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on High, the promise of the Holy Ghost, poured out abundantly like the refreshing rains, the Witness under whose loving tutelage we grow continually in the knowledge of Christ, that heritage of the Church who is too little known and claimed today.

I believe that the Bible is the Word of God because of the very mystery of the Person in the Old Testament who at last stands revealed in the blaze of glory of Christ's coming to destroy the works of the Devil and to bring to naught him that had the power of death; that is to say, the Devil. Step by step through the successive ages was he revealed ever more and more clearly, and yet when he came he was so different, so above all expectations, that none knew him until finally he opened up the Scriptures and the minds of men and pouring out his Holy Spirit as the efficient agent transformed all who heard and received the message, into new-born men.

I accept the Bible as the Word of God be-

cause of its own miraculous character, born in parts in the course of the ages and yet completed in one harmonious whole, the continuous development and enlargement of that great taproot of all prophecy, the promise to the woman of One who was to be the Redeemer of our race and the curse of the serpent,—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). Here from the mouth of God himself begins faith's highway leading from the primal fall down through the ages to Christ and full redemption. Without the Bible, all God's precious parables in Nature, his other book, are utterly lost, and nature, exploited merely for lucre or for the pride of science, is degraded and ruined. When all men duly honor the Bible we shall have a restored nature, smiling and beautiful and rich in spiritual lessons for anointed eyes, more precious than all material gains.

I testify that the Bible is the Word of God because it is food for the spirit just as definitely as bread and meat are food for the body. We feel hunger and take food and are refreshed and go forth to work and to do that we could not accomplish without food. Likewise do we hunger for God. "My soul longeth, yea, even

fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God . . . Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." And as our Lord said to the woman at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. . . . If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." So we come to our Father's table and find food and drink to the satisfying of the spirit, and as we feed regularly we are transformed daily into the knowledge and likeness of him; and should any one seek to entice us to other tables, we turn wonderingly to our Host and say to him like Peter of old, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Its very paradoxes convince me that the Bible is the Word of God, for although they are often abundantly illustrated in our Father's other book of nature, they are clearly opposed to the wisdom by which men of the world regulate their lives. A Christian, however, notes them daily, rejoices in them, and continually discovers fresh ones for his guidance.

To scatter is to increase.
To withhold is to court poverty.
Believing is seeing.

He who would gain his life must lose it.

The chiefest honor is not to serve self but others.

I yield up my liberty in order that I may be free.

When I am weak, then am I strong.

The richest are often those the world declares poor, and despises.

The truly blessed are the meek, the poor in spirit, the peacemakers, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

For such maxims the world has no real use.

The Bible appeals to me strongly as a physician, because it is such excellent medicine; it has never yet failed to cure a single patient if only he took his prescription honestly. It is in the realm of spiritual therapeutics just what we so long to find for all our bodily ailments, a true panacea, a universal remedy; why, it even brings the dead to life! There is surely no other cure in the world for that pandemic leprosy of the soul called sin. The world is always running out of the bushes, crying Eureka, I have found a cure, but its failures are but pitiful witnesses to man's incompetence.

Few of my scientific friends are aware that their science flourishes best in a land where the Bible is honored, for there alone is the guaran-

tee of liberty and its attendant blessings. Where the Bible is dishonored, life becomes cheap and science an early victim, or it survives in a destructive form. My dear friend and scientist, our "science" is but folly when God is left out and if he is not in all our thoughts. What sense is there in boasting that science is our mistress to be cultivated for her own sake apart from all question of utility? What is there in the mere knowledge of the groupings of things and in the formulation of scientific dogmas of the laws governing matter that you are drawn to it so irresistibly? And why is such science any more worth your entire life's energies than it would be in a haphazard way to throw a handful of sand on the floor and then to spend the rest of your life studying just how the grains happened to fall?

If you are not a Christian, you do not know whence that impulse to investigate nature comes. Let me tell you that the inborn unconquerable impulse to investigate nature is the too often unrecognized and unacknowledged tribute the spirit unconsciously pays to nature's Creator, the dim but still imperative voice of the spirit harking back to him before whom she once walked in the Garden with clear vision. Alas, God calls, while like the muckrake we often gaze at the earth, failing to lift our eyes

heavenward to him who holds the crown poised over our heads, to him who alone is the Interpreter of all things. I fear that with all our twentieth century boasting of progress, it is in reality a question between little science and big Science, between creature and Creator. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Where then shall we land if we never even make a beginning? If we serve the creature rather than the Creator? Also as one has well said, those who profess to worship the Creator *by means of* the creature, soon come to lose sight of the Creator *in* the creature.

The Bible, unlike any other book in the world, is a living Word, and as such is its own valiant defender. All the arguments of the best of men and all their skill in assembling them effectively are but feeble apologies compared to the mordant power of the Word itself; the best human helps are those which have constant recourse to the Word. Does not everyone observe that wherever the Bible is quoted, its words shine out like diamonds from the printed page? I do not decry human aids, for they are often excellent and needful, but I rejoice most when a beginner accepts and begins to study the Word with prayer; that puts the responsibility upon God. Hungry, disappointed older Christians are always weak in the Word.

Is there any judgment yet to come for the sins of men? Is there in this universe a bar of justice higher than man's? Upon the answers to such queries depends all that is worth preserving in what we call civilization. On these questions our Bible is ringing, clear, and definite, utterly rejecting the prevalent notion that our concepts of sin and righteousness and judgment are merely evolutionary, while it lifts each of these fundamental notions up into the light of Heaven and the throne of God. Sin, righteousness, judgment, and mercy are named about twenty-five hundred times in the Bible, woven as they are into the warp and woof of its entire economy. Man's notion of sin rises no higher than that of some hindrance in his convenient social adjustments, a sort of herd morality. The Word adjudicates sin as high treason against the very throne of God and of the moral order of his universe. Righteousness expresses God's character in his moral government of his servants; judgment declares, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," while mercy stands without wringing her hands and weeping for the lost sinner.

Is it possible to reconcile these conflicting elements and to save the sinner, lost and condemned? The Bible is God's only authentic answer,—impossible to conceive apart from

this revelation of the Father's great love. Men continually relegate their fellows to the scrap-heap as worthless, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, . . . hath quickened us together with Christ," and saves the lost and hopeless.

On such a revelation of the mystery of God and of his Christ I take my stand for time and eternity. Surely a heavenly light shines from its pages; joy, contentment, peace, and a happy family life are fostered wherever it is honored, and nations are established in righteousness. In Bible lands alone do little children get their full meed of affection and grow up sweet, pure, and lovable into noble manhood and womanhood, and there alone, too, are parents honored and lessons of respect for constituted authority learned. The Bible alone brings the hungry soul into sweet concourse with the mind of God and so gives strength to bear trials and even to rejoice in misfortunes. Where else are the graces of humility, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, forbearance, patience exalted? It is the great revelation of God as man's "Tremendous Lover." It is the book of broken hearts: God's heart broken on the cross as he became the Saviour of the world; man's heart broken as God's Spirit reveals to him so great a love, and laid at the foot of the cross.

This, then, is the end of the Father's great quest begun in the Garden at the fall, when the saddest cry ever heard was wrung from his breaking heart, "Where art thou?"—the voice of God seeking his lost son. At last he found him, and the search ended with the joyful cry, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And that Son has ever since been busy bringing many other sons by new birth into glory. Reader, if you do not yet know him, let me extend to you the great invitation in three simple words, "COME AND SEE." For this is a "whosoever" message for whosoever will may come and share in all the joys for time and for eternity.

Concluding, let me offer a brief syllabus of some reasons for accepting the Bible literally as the Word of God.

It is the one book in the world which reveals a God infinitely above our own natural imaginings, worthy of our love and worship, and inexhaustible in his wonderful nature.

The heart of man the whole world over ever hungers for God. St. Augustine cried, "Lord, thou hast made us for thyself and restless are our hearts until they rest in thee." The Bible message is God's perfect answer to that despairing cry of our Spirit-starved humanity.

The Bible is a miracle—one coherent message

written by God's prophets over a period of centuries, comparable to nothing else on earth.

It treats nature with a dignity and comprehension comparable to no other book ever penned.

It treats the book of nature, too, as a world of parables of the spiritual life, as the spirit of man, disclosed in his language of metaphor, trope, parable, and allegory has always unpremeditatedly held it to be.

Alone does it reveal sin as the act of a traitor in rebellion against God.

In opposition to false science and false religions it fixes the origin of sin at a particular time and in an individual, Satan, and at the very outset promises sin's cessation forever when that arch traitor shall be rendered forever impotent; then eternal peace will reign.

It reveals God's righteousness in Christ, his judgment of sin, and his great mercy to every sinner who trusts him.

It is an intimate revelation of Christ, God-man, the only Saviour of the world, to all his followers the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

It reveals God's gift of his Holy Spirit—our ever-present Guide on our earthly pilgrimage.

It is the one book in the world which is always young and fresh and inspiring.

The Bible has stood the persistent assaults

of Satan and all its enemies through all ages, and it goes on shining with ever-increasing luster.

Whatever there is in civilization that is worth while rests on the Bible's precepts.

If only half the people would accept and apply the Bible whole-heartedly myriads would be won to Christ and the terrors which threaten our nation today would all vanish, and peace with her attendant blessings would reign.

Everywhere and in all its teachings the Bible claims to be the authoritative Word of God, and as such I accept it. Well has one said:

> This Book, this holy Book, on every line
> Marked with the seal of high divinity,
> On every leaf bedewed with drops of love;
> This lamp from off the everlasting throne,
> Mercy took down, and in the night of Time
> Stood, casting in the dark her gracious bow;
> And evermore beseeching men with tears
> And earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live.

III

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

III

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

"THAT eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."

The Bible in its opening paragraphs presents man to us as created by God directly and separately from the whole animal kingdom and as made in God's own image and reflecting his character. But this blessed state vanished when sin and Satan entered, and man, unfit any longer to walk in intimacy with God, was driven out and the garden closed. This precious original fellowship with God a degraded race still denies and dishonors. Before taking up the restored relationship for all who come to him by the new and perfect way of faith, let us briefly examine the prevalent latter-day notions of man's origin.

Lost thus in sin and indifferent to his ancestry, man traces it along the gamut of the animal creation through multiplied millions of years, until he arrives in an archæan ooze of the palæozoic seas, where arriving at an impasse, namely, how ever life got into the ooze, he leaps lightly over the infinite gulf which separates life from death and postulates that

primordial organic eozoon as a natural product of the hitherto eternally dead matter, or he even looks up into the infinite space of the starry heavens for some microscopic life germs conveyed to earth on a meteoric chariot of fire. But, again, life being assumed (that ever fatal flaw in the materialistic argument), how next account for the subsequent miraculous changes in the animated bathybian slime, as it ever aspires in a deliberately determinate upward direction in orthogenetic series, to culminate in man, so marvelously different from the rest of the animal kingdom in his endowment with a moral sense and with all his profound spiritual cravings? This clearly objective tendency of creation all theories of accidental variation and preservation of the fittest fail to account for, excepting one, and that is the concept of my old friend and teacher, distinguished herpetologist and paleontologist, Professor Cope (I cite the Encyc. Brit., 11th ed., vol. 27, p. 811): "E. D. Cope put such a line of argument in the most cogent fashion; the course of evolution, both in the production of variations and their selection, seemed to him to imply the existence of *an originative conscious directive force,* for which he invented the term 'bathmism' " (the italics are mine).

Cope felt, as many another great scientist,

the profound and, may I add, almost hopeless mystery of the why and how of the whole thing and in his effort to clarify the situation, as it appears to some of us, gave the whole materialistic position away. The bathmic idea of the primitive nebula, rock, or slime was then to lead upwards and onwards in an uninterrupted progressive march (with innumerable side branches), in the direction of placing man upon earth, while at the same time preparing elaborately in animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms for man's advent by storing the earth with its marvelous multitude of organic and inorganic materials that he alone of all the animals could utilize, these being designed to furnish him with fine buildings, sculptures, elaborate clothing, and in later days with factories, railroads, telephones, telescopes, and radios, and the multiplied thousands of other whatnots, together with an infinity of objects to delight and interest him, not omitting his spiritual perceptions,—all being evolved from the bathmic purposes of that visitant meteorite, ancient rock, or protoplasmic ancestor.

Of two difficulties, it is always wise to choose the lesser. Personally, I have no difficulty at all in believing the miracles recorded so graphically, thrillingly and impressively in the Bible, but this other miracle that life launched itself

somehow mysteriously on a dead globe, and once launched began to develop in a definite determinate direction without the guidance of a creator, is so vast in its demands that my mind balks. Let me state the dilemma in another way. Either God created the primeval nebula, or the primitive stuff (Urstoff), initiated its own processes of condensation and revolvings, heating and cooling, and building up of its chemical constituents, and so ultimately created us, with our capacity for love and all our longings for Him, and at last gave us the Bible and faith and our sure hope of eternal life in Christ, or that eternal unconscious nebula pregnant with all the possibilities of the future and all the complexities of the modern universe *in posse*, step by step produced them *in esse*. I would lose my mind, I think, if I tried to believe the latter fatalistic hypothesis, but I do find it simple and natural and easy to accept "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." So of the two difficulties, God or no God, I joyfully choose the former; yea, "God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

Now grant me this simple comprehensive postulate, and all I ask follows naturally: "In the beginning God"; man made in his image; a "must needs be" in the coming in of sin; sin

introduced into this world by an evil rebellious spirit; the fall of man; God's promise of redemption and all its foreshadowings in the Old Testament; in the New, God himself manifested in the flesh upon earth, come to destroy sin and break the power of its originator; God so revealed in his infinite perfections, and above all "God is love"; sin forever put away; the restoration of all things, and eternal peace amid the glories of a new heaven and earth worthy of the gigantic episode we have just been considering in God's vast universe. Why, the very meditation upon such a program commands assent with the trembling query, "Is it possible that I, overwhelmed by the consciousness of my sinful nature, may live to enjoy such a grand denouement?"

The whole Christian program we have just outlined hinges upon the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us, therefore, examine the guarantees of this decisive factor from two directions: Is the deity of Jesus taught in the Bible? What difference is observable in my life consequent upon such a belief?

First of all, then, what does the Bible say about Christ in prophecy in the Old Testament and in fulfilment in the New? A redeemer was promised Eve, one able to overcome Satan, whose head he would crush; and in all their

parts the old Scriptures thrill with the unseen but shortly to be revealed presence of a mysterious person,—a revelation growing in majesty as the centuries roll on; of the tribe of Judah; a prophet greater than Moses (Deut. 18); a king to sit upon David's throne forever (Psa. 2; 89:27-29; 45, cf. with Heb. 1:8); Messiah, God's Son (Psa. 2); God's Passover lamb (cf. Exod. 12 and John 1:29) come to bear the sins of the world (cf. Isa. 53 with John 3:16 and Acts 8:30-35). And yet, "What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell" (Prov. 30:4).

Mysterious in his origin, "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," of whom "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand" (Psa. 116), Jehovah's fellow (Zech. 13:7). Of him Isaiah wrote (ch. 9), "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from hence forth even for ever." In chapter 7, he is Immanuel, "which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

But what has the New Testament to say as we come down to the time of the presentation of the Messiah and the proclamation of his Gospel? What did the spiritually minded Jew at that time understand as to the person and character of "Him who was to come"?

Ask John the Baptist (John 1:34), and he cries, "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

What sayest thou, Nathanael? "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God" (John 1:49).

And you disciples after companying with him? Peter replies for all, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

John the evangelist, why did you write your Gospel? "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Mary through Luke reveals to us that fact most essential to our comprehension of sharing deity with the Father, the manner of his conception: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," and "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest . . . the Son of God."

Zacharias sings (Luke 1: 68, 70), "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people . . . as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets"; and Zacharias' own son, John the Baptist, was to "be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways."

What a galaxy of witnesses; surely further proof is superfluous, and we might rest the case right here as proved. Jesus died because of his special definite claim of Sonship at his trial when the high priest asked, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." He answered, "Thou hast said" (Matt. 26).

I recently wrote briefly about the use my friend, Dr. W. W. Keen, made of the word "worship" in the Gospels as proving the deity of our Lord, urging that it had no such clear and limited significance in Greek as it has at last by custom attained in English. I do, however, think that the Doctor is right in this, namely, that our Lord, and he alone, repeatedly received the profound reverence implied in the eastern posture of a suppliant at the feet, implying varying degrees of submission, reverence, and worship.

Jesus means Jehovah my Saviour, for "It is

he himself who shall save his people from their sins." Can he who raised Lazarus dead four days be less than God? Was or was not that majestic sufferer God, who had power to lay down his life upon the cross, a voluntary sacrifice for sin, was buried, and in three days took it again and broke the power of death by his resurrection, who then companied at intervals with his disciples forty days, discoursing upon the kingdom of Heaven, while tested as to the reality of his substantial appearance by many infallible proofs, who at last ascended into Heaven and took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high and poured out his Holy Spirit upon believers? And what witness more important than that of this same Spirit proclaiming him at Pentecost, "Jesus of Nazareth," "David's Lord," "God's Holy One," their "risen Messiah," "That same Jesus . . . both Lord and Christ," henceforth Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

What great lesson did Paul learn when smitten to the ground by the vision of him in his heavenly glory? "Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20). To the Corinthians he writes of the "mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto

our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:7, 8). Paul designates Jesus as the Son, and the Son of God, twenty-four times in the Acts and the Epistles.

John's last message in his epistle is a cry of warning against any denial of the relationship of Christ to God as his own Father as the great latter-day heresy, "He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son"; and "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God"; also, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" In no summary should one omit the testimony of the fifth, the divinity chapter of John's Gospel, where our Lord himself cites six testimonies to his sonship: His own claim, the witness of John the Baptist, the witness of the Father, his works, the testimony of the Scriptures, and Moses' testimony. I only cite further the "I am's" of this Gospel, as identifying him with Jehovah in his infinite, unfathomable nature; note but one, "Before Abraham was, I am," and reflect upon it.

Abundant and overwhelming as these evidences are, we may not hope to convince the skeptical by clear logic alone. Mere human

wisdom can never avail to compass the things of God, for is it not written, "And they shall be all taught of God," and "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14); also, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, save by the Holy Spirit"? (1 Cor. 12:3.)

This Spirit of love ever waits to draw us to Christ, the Son of God. The fault of any delay to acknowledge his claim rests not upon Him but with us, as he has said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life"; while to the willing ones he says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "Ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things" (1 John 2:27). "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10).

Let me not, however, appear to depreciate the high potency of a God-inspired reason in our Christian life, for the objects of our faith, though above the discovery of reason, yet when revealed pre-eminently commend themselves to a purified reason. Also when the ebb of faith is low through physical or other infirmity, we need constantly to hold fast by the will backed

up by reason. The early registration of an emphatic decision by the will at a time when the light shines brightly is a tower of strength later on in the darkness. The maturer the Christian, the more does he discover a heavenly reasonableness in all he finds and believes in the Word of God.

What difference does such a belief make to me?

It is of little moment whether I affirm in a creed that Christ is the Son of God or whether I deny it, if my belief remains a mere asseveration, a matter of words, which fails profoundly to affect my whole life. My Father will never honor an intellectual assent to a mere proposition, for his cry from Adam down through the ages ever is, "My son, give me thine heart"; heart and head must both be enlisted in his service, heart taking the pre-eminence. So I say, what difference then does my belief make?

First and foremost, I know about sin and see sin in my nature and in the world as I never could have understood it apart from Christ on the cross. Without Christ, the Son of God, I never could have understood sin as an act of rebellion against the very throne of God, infinite in its consequences; this the experience of a long life confirms. Again, I had never known the meaning of that most precious word

righteousness, nor of the righteousness of God as manifested in his Son, nor of God's grace, of faith, or infinite love, all of which hinge on the deity of Jesus. These and many other words profoundly affecting my life have come through the Bible to have new meanings. Apart from the Bible, they have little if any meaning, while the Bible itself is saturated with these wonderful spiritual conceptions, enabling us poor sinners to share the very mind of God on these deep questions.

My narrow horizon, once halting at the margin of a grave, is now through Christ, the Son of God, limitless in its expanse. Why, I lift my head by night with confidence and eager expectation and tell Arcturus, Vega, Aldebaran, Altair, Deneb, and Saiph, and all the heavenly hosts that in due time I shall visit and know them one by one in the ages to come, follow them as they grow old and then be present at the birth of the glories of a new heavens and a new earth.

The precious parables of nature, separated from Christ's creative hand, lose their meaning, and the imagination which plays with tropes, metaphors, and parables giving lightness and beauty and grace to our language raising it out of the deadly commonplace would then appear only as a sort of meaningless fri-

volity. Why, leave God out and all real poetry disappears. Nor, apart from this faith, would we feel the thrill of the majesty of the mountains, of God's lofty storehouses of ice and eternal snows, of the glory of his vast panoramic canvases painted on our evening skies, in the heaven-driven chariots with their plashy lightnings and the bursting storms when man and all created things seek shelter. Trials, sorrows, suffering, and patience, losing their meaning and robbed of the blessing with which he comforts and confirms his children in their faith in him, would leave only a residuum of bitterness and a memory of galling afflictions and nothing more. Of all the countless millions born of women in all the ages of the world, the Son of God alone came "to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isa. 61:3).

Without Christ, I lose God as my Father in any particular and real sense such as I now have through adoption by the redeeming power of his blood. In John's Gospel, the word "father" occurs one hundred and thirty-four times, and with the exception of eleven is used of the sonship of Christ—ten of the eleven refer to the fathers in the wilderness, and to

Abraham, and to Satan as the father of the unbelieving Jews; the last of the eleven is in 20:17, where Jesus having lived, died, and risen again, having accomplished his work, sends this special message to his followers, coupling them with himself in the relationship to the Father as the great and final result of all his efforts: "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

If, therefore, Christ is not the Son of God, I lose my daily companionship with him and I have no access to the Father nor any guidance of his Holy Spirit. And shall I lag in my faith behind the Roman centurion at the cross in exclaiming, "Truly this was the Son of God"?

If Christ is not God, prayer, so necessary to the spirit's life, becomes meaningless, and fails to pass beyond the sound of my voice.

Life's greatest blessings fade away, for the Son of God alone sanctifies all earthly relationships, his blessed gifts of mother, father, sisters, brothers, friends, all these laid upon the altar and given back ennobled and illumined with the light of that eternity into which our new-born spirits are launched.

No longer can I live the blessed life of faith, knowing my Father's love to be vastly greater than all my circumstances at all times.

No longer have I the clear assurance that righteousness and love will prevail, indeed have already prevailed ever since sin was judged upon the cross, or that in a little while he who is to come will come again and set up his glorious and everlasting kingdom, when righteousness will cover the earth as the waters cover the seas, when "in that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 14).

No longer shall I find already here on earth my Ephesian portion in the heavenlies with him, and begin here and now to live on the old corn of the land even as I pass through the wilderness in my earthly pilgrimage. Life ceases to be a pilgrimage,—a home-going, and but a poor unsatisfying end in itself.

And what of all the precious lives poured out upon the altar of faith by the noble band of martyrs and missionaries? All, all in vain! Nay, if Jesus is not the Son of God, then the world's wisdom becomes the rule of life, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die," and the world's greatest epitome of that wisdom is the unutterably sad Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, the grave of all hope.

Friend of mine, accredited exponent among men of earthly science, faith in Christ as God is a far higher, a heavenly wisdom (science) which you may not put into a crucible and then command "reveal thyself," for it involves infinite love, the sum of all the loves of the universe and yet vastly more. Be honest with this as with your earthly science and put the hypothesis to its own proper test and "Come and see."

IV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

IV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

AS A great fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith in the Apostles' time and in the century following, incorporated in the traditions of the Church and proclaimed in her written documents, the virgin birth was never questioned by those who professed to believe the Scriptures. Justin Martyr in A. D. 140 declared that the virgin birth was the universal belief to be accepted by everyone calling himself a Christian. It is an integral part of all ancient documents of the Gospels of Matthew and of Luke, as Harnack, leader of the higher critics, acknowledges, though at the same time, as one has said, he "naïvely suggests that some way be devised by which the passages referring to it can be legitimately omitted"! It is in the heart of the Apostles' Creed, which reaches back into the first half of the second century, representing the faith of all early Christians, and was only denied on *a priori* grounds by such philosophizing sects as the Ebionites, who denied the divinity of Christ, and the Docetists, who took the other extreme and denied him a real humanity. His combined deity and hu-

manity was the thrilling mystery of all the Old Testament, while Spirit-filled men in all ages, like Nathanael and Simeon, doubtless have known that in the Messiah God would in some way be clearly manifested in and through our humanity, although the manner of his coming remained a mystery.

The references to the virgin birth in Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14, and Jeremiah 31:22 neither obviously nor necessarily refer to the Christ as born of a woman or of a virgin exclusive of an earthly father, but the moment the fact is revealed by the Spirit of God it is at once discovered that the language readily admits of and is exalted by such an interpretation; thus with the facts before one, the ancient purpose long hidden in the counsels of God becomes plain. It appears to me also that the dignity of such a revelation is greatly enhanced, chaste and sacred as it must needs be, when the full understanding follows the event. Matthew inspired by the Holy Spirit translates the Hebrew word "*almah,*" meaning a young woman, in Isaiah 7:14, by the Greek word "*parthenos,*" meaning virgin; Luke also uses the same Greek word when he tells us that Gabriel was sent "to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph." The Old Testament with this blessed truth revealed becomes at once a new book, a

fresh treasure house of the mind and purposes of God; every page becomes illuminated with this new and high conception which confers added dignity and meaning to its events as they develop through the centuries toward the working out of his plans.

While but one clear New Testament statement was needed to reveal the fact of the virgin birth, our Father in his infinite mercy has vouchsafed us two complementary records as the ground of our perfect assurance in a matter so vital to faith. These accounts are those of the first chapters of Matthew and Luke, the former from the standpoint of Joseph, the husband, who gives the child his legal status and who names him Jesus, Saviour; and the latter, clearly Mary's account of the divine overshadowing and the implantation of the divine seed by the Holy Spirit. Read both and carry them ever in mind in studying the Scriptures, for an analysis detached from the synthesis of Scripture may but serve to mar the "sobriety, lofty purpose, and spiritual beauty of the narratives," and as Bishop Moule of Durham has further said, "No isolated references can properly represent a subject so deeply interwoven into the very texture of the Gospel."

Luke, the first Christian doctor, his calling being much in evidence in the medical terms

he so often uses, was a true scientist, saturated with the spirit of his profession, careful and accurate as an investigator, and fully cognizant of the vital importance of the facts he was about to relate. He gives us, I believe, in his first forty-two words in the Greek, eighty-two in the English, without the slightest observable effort, the largest quantum of certainty and assurance ever expressed in equal compass in any language. Let us pause for a moment that we may receive a deeper impression, as Luke proceeds—to set forth in order a narrative—of things most surely believed among us—delivered over unto us—by eyewitnesses—from the beginning—ministers or servants of the Word —It seemed good to me, too, having had a perfect understanding—of all things—from the very first—to write unto thee in order—most excellent Theophilus (loved of God, and so we all are also Theophilites—compare John 3:16).

Where, I submit, in the world can one find more simply and naturally stated a greater and more justifiable assurance, as well as more competent testimony, in a matter exceeding all other earthly interests in importance? Then, fearless as a scientist should ever be, Luke does not hesitate to begin his record with two well-ascertained miraculous events, namely, the manner of the birth of the Messiah, the Son of

David, and that of his servant, John the Baptist. It is significant to note the appropriateness of these declarations in that Matthew and Luke alone deal with our Lord's childhood, while Mark and John have nothing on this head as it is apart from their purposes in writing.

The logical course for those who reject these clear and positive declarations, integral parts of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, is to join those old Docetists referred to above who rejected our Lord's human nature. To do this, one must obliterate from memory the unimpeachable evidences to the contrary of the apostle and the physician, and then perhaps strive to erect a doctrine on the first verse of Mark, where Jesus is declared to be the "Christ, the Son of God." Or there remains the alternative of the Ebionites, and of the Socinians, who over fourteen hundred years later denied the divine nature. Names may change, but the weapons of the enemy are ever the old ones used centuries ago. Satan goes about like a roaring lion and is diligent, but he is not very resourceful, being for the most part only a poor old imitator; the trouble is that we are more easily entrapped than a silly fowl, for "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

The Bible being a living book, its right use

soon genders conviction, and so as I read, unsophisticated and as a child, these lofty and spiritually beautiful narratives drive arrows of conviction deep into my heart, first arousing wonder, then adoration and absolute faith, and then follow the varied fruits of the life, while henceforth the truths vouchsafed by the Spirit of God are discerned by direct vision as one beholds the sweet light of the sun. If we have absorbed this great truth already in childhood, it is confirmed daily as one grows continually better acquainted with the Scriptures. The virgin birth is the great key to the Bible storehouse. If I reject the virgin birth, the New Testament becomes a dead, man-made letter, recounting the well-intentioned imaginings of honest but misguided men. Those who continue to carp at the supposed "reticence" of Mark and John to dwell explicitly upon the virgin birth must take it upon themselves to determine for God our Father how many times he must repeat a matter before they will admit it; forsooth a dangerous rôle for a homunculus flashing out of the night of eternity upon the earth for a few seconds, only to vanish like a wraith of the morning mist.

But I do positively affirm that Mark and John and Paul, while not entering unnecessarily into the particular circumstances, are yet so replete

with this blessed doctrine of the virgin birth that I am astonished that this fact is not more regularly recognized and insisted upon. In Mark he is called both Son of God and Son of man, while the Father's voice testifies from Heaven at his baptism, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Even the affrighted unclean spirits bear testimony that he is the Holy One of God, and the Son of God, while all knew that he was the son of Mary living among them. Let then the burden of the proof rest on him who objects, and let him explain how in any other than the simple plain Biblical way Jesus could have been both Son of God and Son of man.

John in the Gospel, in his First Epistle, and in Revelation, is undeniably clear as to Jesus' eternal existence and his deity; repeatedly we hear Jesus in John's Gospel use the "I am," the Old Testament name of God. John knew Mary, Jesus' earthly mother, from the first, and to his care she was entrusted at the cross, and yet John avers that he wrote his Gospel "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Again let me repeat it, John knew well that Mary was Jesus' mother, and he it is who also reveals to us "That eternal life, which was with the Father,

and was manifested unto us." It is he, too, who in this First Epistle says warningly, "He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." Let all who are inclined to be skeptical as to the virgin birth give heed to this Epistle written in large measure to prepare men for, and to combat, this latter-day deadly heresy of denying the Christ his heavenly birthright.

And if Paul was not aware of the virgin birth, how otherwise shall we explain his statement in the second chapter of Philippians that, being in the form of God, Christ laid aside the insignia of his divine majesty and assumed the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men (as born of the virgin Mary) and even died upon the cross for us sinners whom he had come to save? So saturated are Paul and John with this great, underlying, vivifying truth of his deity that one might more easily maintain from their writings that, while Christ was indeed God, he probably was not man at all!

He who violently wrenches the narratives of the virgin birth from the New Testament in order to be consistent must also uniformly expunge all other miracles and with them the atoning death, the resurrection, the ascension, and the present mediatorial office of our Lord, as well as the presence here on earth today of his vicegerent, the Holy Spirit, whose person-

ality and blessed office then dwindle to an indefinable "influence." The virgin birth is gratefully confessed today, now some nineteen centuries after the event, by the Greek church, by all Catholics, and by all the evangelical churches of the world. In the Protestant Episcopal Church, where the daily services are fully used, this confession is repeated over a thousand times every year, calculates Father Hughson.

Rob Christ of his deity, and every true Christian will at once cry out of a breaking heart, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him," and never again will one be moved by God's Spirit to exclaim, "My Lord and my God."

A mere assent to the doctrine of a virgin birth as an article contained in a familiar and time-honored creed means but little to him who repeats it. What, then, ought such a faith mean to the Church and to the individual? To give it up would mean, I think, just such a terrible wrench as one would experience when he learned that the mother-care and love which had enshrined his life was after all but that of a foster parent. Who can describe the revulsion of feeling experienced by one from whose heart was snatched this precious light, this revealing key to the Scriptures? The denial of

the virgin birth robs Christ of the glory he shares with the Father (Heb. 1 and 2). To rob Christ of his humanity is to place God again at an infinite distance from sinners. If this is not true, then there can never be a reconciliation of all creation to God and a final undoing of all sin. Then, I have lost my elder brother, my Kinsman-Redeemer. Nor is there any longer a God-given representative head of our race, who has bound the strong man and destroyed his works; there is no apostle and great high priest at the throne of God. If Christ is not God, then worship is denied him, and I have no Saviour to talk to in prayer. And, the cross, that age-long symbol of the passion of God for a lost world, loses its meaning.

But enough of these negations, for the virgin birth is a fact fully established by competent testimony and abundant collateral evidences, believed by men all through the ages as a necessary factor in their salvation secured by an ever-living, ever-acting Saviour, viewed with wonder by angels in Heaven and acknowledged by the Father. To deny the virgin birth because of its miraculous nature is to deny the validity of all Scripture, which is but a continuous series of revelations of the mind and acts of God, and as such is miraculous throughout.

V

THE BLOOD ATONEMENT

V

THE BLOOD ATONEMENT

"When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exod. 12:13, 23).

"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exod. 3:5).

IN LOOKING forward to this brief statement of the great doctrine of the blood atonement so conspicuously written on all the pages of the Bible I had anticipated some freedom in presenting a matter so vital in the plan of our salvation. Contrary to my expectation, however, I have found it difficult and resistant to many efforts. At last I found, I feel sure, the cause of my failures, which lay more in the heart than in the head. It is far from the truth merely to enunciate clearly the nature and varying purposes of the sacrifices in the Old Testament and then to point out their fulfilment in the New, for the sacrifices in both Old and New reveal God above all else as our "tremendous Lover." The sacrifices represent the fulness of the outpouring of his boundless love, never wholly to be comprehended in all the ages of eternity.

The place therefore whereon we stand is holy ground; let us approach it in a spirit of reverence, and with hearts filled with thanksgiving, praise and love for him who here reveals to his children the mysteries of a redemption accomplished at such an infinite cost. Let us also be constantly mindful, as we turn the pages of both Old Testament and New, that in our Father's view every page is besprinkled with the blood of the cross, and that every Jewish sacrifice of old depicted the sufferings and death of his Son as a fact already accomplished.

Universal sin in the world, everywhere felt and in one way or another recognized, has clearly placed a vast gulf between God and man. And yet knowing that God alone can satisfy our heart-hunger, how various and how futile have been the vain efforts to bridge the infinite distance!

Among the heathen, sacrifices have ever been the common way of approach to an offended deity, in all races and all ages, with the idea of appeasing wrath. But no such perversion is found in the Bible.

Elihu, friend of Job, knowing more of God, utters his lonely cry, "Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness."

David cries with confidence born of personal experiences with God. "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path" (Psa. 27). And lastly, when the darkness breaks and the Sun of Righteousness arises, Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world," and "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

And all who have come to him bear witness to these truths and ask for no other waters to assuage their thirsty souls.

Originally I suppose the sacrifices of the heathen and those of the Jewish people were identical in their origin, arising from some earlier revelation. Be this conjecture as it may, it is at once evident that the sacrifices in the Bible are utterly different in their nature and intent from those of all the world around Palestine. Let us therefore pass over the heathen ceremonies and consider only those which form a part of the pure revelation of God, as carefully and minutely described in the first three books of the Bible.

That sacrifice is central and controlling in the Biblical doctrine of salvation is made emphatically clear by the fact that the very words "sacrifice" and "blood" occur about seven hundred times.

The maxim of the law from which all else

flows in this connection is found in Exodus twelve, in the brief statement, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," and in Hebrews nine, "almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission," statements uttered by Jews separated by an interval of fifteen hundred years and binding in one God's revelation.

In the time of the patriarchs the head of the family, as a priest, offered the sacrifices. I venture to state my conviction that in the whole Bible there is no other picture or type of the love of God for his Son, and the sacrifice involved in sending him to earth to die for our sins, equal to that of Abraham and Isaac. Who can measure the depths of the sorrow of that broken-hearted father as he journeyed those three days to the far-off place with his son, dedicated to death by his hand and mourned all that time as one already dead? And yet this is but a faint adumbration of God's great sacrifice as he gave his only begotten Son, like Isaac a willing victim, for our salvation.

After the patriarchs came four hundred years of slavery while a nation was being born, in the fulness of time to be led out of the land of sin to walk with God through the wilderness to the Holy Land led out by his mighty hand and stretched-out arm. Under what covenant

with their deliverer are they now to go forth? A sacrifice fundamental in the history of the nation called the Passover, the shedding of the blood of an innocent victim, the blood sprinkled on the door without while those within partook of a feast, a memorial of God's mercy. And when the destroying angel came he visited all the houses of Egypt which were unprotected and passed over those of the protected Israelites.

So that which was the salvation of God's people became the death of their enemies.

All the precious teachings connected with this Passover clearly foreshadow the death of Christ, his blood shed to wash away our sins and his body broken to be our heavenly food; nor can we at all rightly apprehend this crowning act of Christ's life apart from a careful study and understanding of the sacrifices in the Old Testament Scriptures.

May I suggest that it is well first to study these sacrifices prayerfully and independently, and later to peruse some of the writings of fellow-Christians such as C. H. M.'s books on the Pentateuch, Jukes on the Law of the Offerings, Miss Ada R. Habershon's Types, and make use of a good Biblical Cyclopedia such as Fausset's or Eadie's. In using helps, as indeed in all our study of the Word, let us be most careful to

avoid one of Satan's commonest devices, that of resting satisfied with a correct interpretation. Always and everywhere let us seek the heart of God manifested in Christ, and not rest until his Holy Spirit pours his love into our hearts. This will prevent complacency or root of bitterness, or the spiritual pride that goes up to a brother in a spirit which obviously says "I am wiser and better than thou."

As touching those who oppose us, let us remember our duty to speak the truth in love, while if any serious trouble seems brewing let us pick up our tents and depart and preach the Gospel elsewhere, for to this end has he sent us forth among the nations.

Have we discovered how much spiritual meat there is in that wonderful book of Leviticus?—the law of the sacrifices, each setting forth Christ in some of his many relations to the Father and to us. The message of the book is the way by which a sinner may approach a holy God; the answer being forever with a sacrifice, and in no other way. Let us glance over some of these precious possessions.

We begin with his Godward aspect: first the burnt offering which symbolizes Christ yielding up his life a voluntary offering wholly to do the will of the Father; it will be recalled also that in the Old Testament the offerer places

his hand on the victim's head as a symbol of identification.

Then the meal offering symbolizing the uniformity and perfection of Christ's character in all its parts, Christ the bread of God, "bread of the world in mercy broken"; compare with this the defects in man detailed in chapter twenty-one.

The peace offering,—here, thanks be unto God our Father, we meet God at the same table in the enjoyment of him who brought peace to the earth and who made peace between God and man, the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9) heralded by the angels in glorious psalm, "Peace on earth to men of good will." As he was about to offer up the sacrifice for our sins he left us this as his heritage: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you"; and, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace" (John 14 and 16); and on his return, after his resurrection, into the midst of his disciples, on both occasions the first spoken word was "peace." So "he is our peace" (Eph. 2). The world spends its time devising ways of securing peace and crying "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" apart from him who is the Prince of peace. Note, and again give thanks, that with the peace offering leavened bread is offered,

making provision for our infirmities! (Lev. 7:13.)

In the sin offering on the day of atonement (Lev. 16:21) we see Christ in type laden with our sins and bearing them away into the wilderness where they are lost sight of forever. Read here the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah for a wonderful exposition of this aspect of Christ's work illuminated by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 5:21), "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

With the seventh and eighth verses of Isaiah 53 turn to the inspired commentary of the Holy Spirit in Acts 8:26 and to the end of the chapter.

It is here in this fifty-third of Isaiah that the great undercurrent of the sacrificial character of all the Scriptures breaks through for our comfort as a mighty refreshing spring. Let us note the significant fact that the word "atonement," so common in Leviticus, is not a correct translation of the Hebrew word *kapporeth,* which means *a covering.* God covered up the sins committed of old until Christ should come and take them away (Cf. Heb. 10:4-10; Rom. 3:25).

One of the saddest results of sin is expressed in a frank old English proverb, "familiarity

breeds contempt," and if not always contempt certainly often indifference. Words and warnings frequently heard are apt to fall upon dulled ears and cease to make any impression. A genuine, heartfelt interest, however, is a radical cure for this evil tendency. I noticed during the late great war, when public announcements were made profoundly affecting the interest of the hearers, that oratory was neither expected nor desired, for the recital of the facts, even though awkwardly presented, was enough to stir the hearts of the people. A condemned man is profoundly moved by the bare message of a reprieve; any attempted dramatic presentation would arouse resentment.

Such passages as we have noted become luminous and filled with new meaning when interpreted in the light of the cross of Jesus Christ.

St. Augustine said of the Old and New Testaments: "The New is in the Old contained. The Old is by the New explained."

Behold "a Lamb as it had been slain."

"In whom we have redemption through his blood."

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."

As we have seen in the Old Testament, so in the New, crimson drops of blood besprinkle

every page. It is written also at the beginning of a new age as in the ancient law "without shedding of blood is no remission"!

Let us follow the narrative thoughtfully throughout the Gospel, for it is far different from any record man alone would or could have made.

At the threshold of the life of Jesus (Matt. 2), and later at the moment of his entrance upon his ministry, we find Satan, Apollyon the Destroyer, lurking to use every means to destroy him and break down his testimony. The hostile power of the enemy grows visibly all through the Gospels, until at last by treachery and subtlety and with the perversion of justice both heathen and Jewish worlds lay violent hands upon him and kill him, pouring out his blood upon the earth as the indisputable evidence of his death and the complete satisfaction of their hellish desires.

To all appearances—and so his broken-spirited disciples concluded—his brief life was ended and his work rendered futile. "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke 24). "For as yet they knew not the scriptures, that he *must* rise again from the dead" (John 20:9). But suddenly, with reports and "visions" and the announcement of angels and with personal contacts,

coupled with the indisputable evidence afforded by the cerements left within the tomb, and by his presence in their midst, the forlorn little band became aware that a fact now had transpired mightier even than the creation of this vast universe. God had wrought the most wonderful of all miracles. Jesus Christ was risen conqueror from among the dead, captivity had been led captive, and Satan's power was broken.

What intensity, what revulsion of feeling may we not impute to the words, "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord!"

VICTORY acquired a new meaning and was the word which at once reanimated their distraught spirits, though as yet all that it might portend was not revealed. But it was part of their Lord's purpose; and, as they now recalled, he had repeatedly told them of it. Now henceforth *his* way, and not theirs, wherever it might lead. Now the life, the death, and the resurrection were before them, and these at once portended some sort of a restoration, though they were not quite clear what; it was God's way, and henceforth theirs. Soon were they to learn the full import of this, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

I have cited all these events because they

form an unbreakable chain, and pivotal to the whole is the cross and the shedding of the Christ's blood—the blood of the atonement.

I wonder if, with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke before one, it is not correct to make two contradictory declarations; one, that the sacrifices of the Old Testament are forgotten, buried, out of sight; the other that they are clearly seen by the eye of faith and evident in all parts of these narratives.

The types and the shadows have disappeared because the antitype, the substance, is at hand.

God's Passover Lamb is in view now. It is fitting, therefore, that we should see no other henceforth than Jesus only. How significant the words of Luke (chap. 22), "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him" (revert here to Acts 2:23), while the Lord's supper, approaching its immediate fulfilment, gave the broken loaf as his body to be the food of the world and the wine poured forth as the blood shed for the washing away of the sins of the world.

The Gospel of John is the gospel of the Son of God, the creative Word, of him who was and is the "effulgence of the glory of God and the very image of His substance." It is the gospel

of him to behold whom is to behold the invisible God (John 1:18), who shared God's glory before the world was (John 17:5), who was loved of the Father before the foundation of the world (John 17:24). It is also the gospel of the sacrifice, full, perfect and sufficient, for the sins of the whole world. Here we find the zenith and the nadir meeting in the Truth. So God brings together, as often elsewhere, the things that to us seem farthest removed from one another.

This Gospel makes its clearest reference to the types of the Old Testament when John the Baptist cries, "Behold the Lamb of God." From that pregnant moment our Lord passed on through the days of his tabernacling in our midst with kingly dignity and prophetic vision to his chosen end. At the beginning of his mission, and at its close, at both times in the temple, he speaks of that death by which he was to glorify God (John 2:19; 12:24, 32, 33). And this Gospel adds at the last this brief reference to the climax of love, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Surely the Lord our God is with us, the shout of a king is among us (Num. 23:21).

The clearest exposition of the relationship between the sacrificial types of the Old Testa-

ment and the antitype of the New is found in the ninth and tenth chapters of Hebrews, which form the strongest link between the economy of the law and the economy of grace.

From henceforth the earthly types hang on the walls of the heavenly temple of grace, indispensable pictures, teaching fresh and precious lessons as they are illuminated from the cross erected in the midst of the temple.

If we seek proof, it is here, nor will any additions strengthen the assertions already made.

If we seek to know more of the diverse applications of the voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God, then let us with care study the Epistles, which are but an expansion of this theme, remembering to rely upon our God-given Teacher (John 14:26; 16:13).

What else does Paul mean when he says, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified"; and, "I am crucified with Christ"; and, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The cross and the blood of the atonement are identical in the economy of heavenly justice and the manifestations of God's grace to sinners.

The agony of the cross, the awful anguish of

the sin-bearer as the billows of the Father's wrath against sin poured out their floods over his devoted head and overwhelmed him, formed the great field of the tragedy of the universe. The outpouring of the blood from his wounds and from his side was the evidence that the transaction was completed. The resurrection was the Father's reply, declaring the sufficiency of the sacrifice.

The case has ever since rested with the world. God is satisfied. Is man satisfied? God has accepted the sacrifice of the cross for sinners; and now he says through his servants, "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

The world at large rejects the cross as an offense (Gal. 5:11) and considers it a stumbling-block and foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23). To the Christian the cross is God's propitiatory or blood-sprinkled mercy-seat (Rom. 3:25). It cleanses him of his sins (1 John 1:7). It is his redemption from the power of the enemy (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:9).

It is his one source of peace (Col. 1:20). By it is released the power of God which raised Christ from the dead (Eph. 1:19, 20; compare Matt. 28:18; I associate this also with Psa. 8:2!).

It is our only source of sanctification, the greatest work of the Spirit of God. It is the basis of all Christian fellowship (1 Cor. 10:16).

All these are the heavenly gifts of our Kinsman Redeemer (Heb. 2:10-15).

And what return does our Saviour ask for his great love wherewith he loved us? That we come to the mercy-seat with broken hearts; confessing sin, weakness, and need, and with faith in his power to hear us; that we become his obedient servants (1 Sam. 15:22; John 14:21; 15:10; 1 John 3:24; 5:2, 3); loving one another (John 13:34, 35; 1 John 3:23); and bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit (John 15:8; Gal. 5:22-24).

Henceforth Christ Jesus is the Apostle and Great High Priest of our profession. We are a royal priesthood appointed to offer up spiritual sacrifices. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."

Now at last, in the end of the ages, are mercy and truth "met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. . . . Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps" (Psa. 85).

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain
Can give the guilty conscience peace
Or take away its stain.
But Christ the Lamb of God
Takes all our sins away
A sacrifice of nobler name
And better far than they.

Thanks be unto God for his great mercy.

VI

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

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THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

"For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. 15).

"If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

"THE resurrection is the triumph over all the results of sin, and over him who had the power of it" (A. C. Hogg).

No revelation in the Word of God is so difficult for the natural man, untaught by the Spirit of God, as the resurrection of these fleshly bodies in which we are tabernacling during this earthly pilgrimage. Many years ago, when in London, I was invited to meet the minister of the City Temple who was attracting much attention by preaching startling novelties week by week to down-town crowds. Among other things he did not believe in the resurrection of our bodies. When my hostess brought up the question, he offered the ancient objection of a man who, having lost a leg or an arm, say in South Africa, later died and was buried in Eng-

land. How, he queried, could the parts of a body so separated and disintegrated be reassembled at the resurrection?

The resurrection was also the stumbling-block to the learned Athenians when Paul reasoned about the final judgment of God "whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him [Christ] from the dead." When they heard this some mocked and others said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." The Sadducees, who also rejected the resurrection, offered their quibbling objection, which was the case of a woman married seven times. "Whose wife would she be at the resurrection?" Paul before Agrippa, Bernice, and Festus, asked, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" as Gabriel in like tenor declared to Mary, inquiring (not objecting) about Christ's miraculous birth, "For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). Christ's diagnosis, which applies to all objectors alike, was, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." To know God's Word is fully to be aware of the power of the Creator. Then all difficulties and doubts are removed. Then our faith rests on our Lord "who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

I am thankful that when Jesus was asked by the Sadducees for Old Testament proof of the resurrection, he did not select a proof text, but rested the matter on the whole, easily discerned, underlying principle involved in God's declaration to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He added to this his own exegesis, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"! Thus he showed that the whole implied teaching of the ancient Scriptures is that of the resurrection of the dead, and that (by the Spirit-taught man) other like simple natural inferences from the Scriptures are warrantable. In like manner, the writer of Hebrews takes the very omissions of the Scripture and the meanings of names to be prophetic touching the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ. Christ, referring to his crucifixion, death for sinners, resurrection, and ascension, said to the disciples going to Emmaus, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24: 25, 26.)

Up in the high mountains lie the eternal snows and the glaciers sending forth their little streams, which unite in the rich lower valleys and continue their course, making the fields fruitful and decking them with beauty. So it

is with resurrection truth, consciously realized in the Old Testament, but only here and there coming to open dogmatic expression. It later appears everywhere in the New Testament as the result of the work of him "who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

That we may be duly impressed by the teaching of the Bible, let us first look at the Gospels, noting at the same time the differences between the first three and John's account. Then let us read the Acts and 1 Corinthians 15. Finally, let us gather data here and there in the Epistles.

It is imperative to begin with prayer for the Holy Spirit's guidance and to conclude our reading with "the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." The several important questions for which we seek answers are these:

Did Christ really die upon the cross? Was he buried? Did he rise from the tomb in his earthly body?

What statements or events led up to his crucifixion? When did he appear to anticipate his death? Did the disciples expect it at any time in the sense that he did?

What does the Bible say about the resurrection of the disciples and of men at large? Will

spirits rejoin their earthly bodies as was manifestly the case with Christ?

Are any reasons given for the physical resurrection of the body?

What does such a belief mean to me in my daily life?

Let us follow the above outline in a general way.

In Matthew 12:40 there is an early intimation of his resurrection when our Lord explains the significance of Jonah's three days' incarceration. He thus fully authenticated that touching narrative (see especially Jonah, chapter 2). Again in Matthew 10:8 and 11:5 and in John 5 and 6 the raising of the dead is referred to, demonstrating thus early, that our Lord asserted his own complete control over the realm of death. The Gospel of Matthew has two hinges on which the book swings near its center. The first is the change in Christ's attitude and teaching touching the Kingdom (Matt. 13), where, with the rejection of the King plainly in view and the visible Kingdom deferred (Matt. 10 to 12), he teaches in parables the mystery form of the Kingdom as it exists today. Then follows (Matt. 16) the great doctrinal hinge

when the disciples clearly recognize his deity and declare, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The words which mark the transition are striking: "*From that time forth* began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must . . . be killed, and be *raised again the third day.*" Again (Matt. 17:23), and yet again (Matt. 20:19), he repeated this, but the popular expectation of an earthly Messianic Kingdom had too strong a hold on the minds of his hearers to permit them to grasp the purport of his words. There was no knowledge of any death and resurrection until both great events came to pass. Then first their reluctant and finally their joyous assent to what their Lord had told them was secured. He did not mention his resurrection, as one might have expected, at the last supper just before his crucifixion, because the supper is a memorial feast of a sacrifice accomplished and looks rather beyond all intervening events to his coming again.

In the Gospel of Mark the break occurs at the eighth chapter, when Christ's public manifestation is ended and he proceeds to train his disciples to take his place after the world's apparent defeat of his mission. Here we note several instructions before the events which are immediately associated with his crucifixion.

They are emphatic repetitions of his first statement (Mark 9:31; 10:33), followed finally by the act of the King in summoning before him for judgment (Mark 12) representatives of each group of his opponents, the ritualistic Pharisees, the worldly Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Scribes.

Luke proclaims Christ's power over death in his message to John the Baptist. Jesus sends the emissaries back to John to tell him, as a sign of the Messianic Kingdom, that the "dead are raised." Again, as Jesus "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," Luke repeats the same declaration recorded by Matthew and Mark. And yet once more, upon nearing Jericho, he gives us the same prophetic words. Thus our Lord connected these two leading events, his death and his resurrection, for all ages. I doubt if the records of these latter days preserve for us all the occasions on which he linked together these two vitally important events, but they are clearly dominant in the statements preserved. We cannot lose sight of the fact that the whole narrative is drawing irresistibly toward its tremendous, dramatic close.

In John's Gospel, early in his ministry (John 2), we find that remarkable, but at the same time cryptic, prophetic utterance, "Destroy

this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," signifying the temple of his body. Jesus states in the great Divinity chapter (John 5) that the dead shall hear his voice and live, and that "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," and that there is to be a resurrection of life and a resurrection of condemnation (note the separation of the two). Again in John 6, after feeding the multitude miraculously with the Heaven-given Passover bread, he proceeds to interpret this feast to them in the strongest possible language, as revealing the intimacy of union and absolute oneness with himself of all who would come to God through him. This interpretation reveals that this union necessitates resurrection. "That . . . I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" and "That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day," and "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Of himself, he says, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again," and "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10).

All arguments for the resurrection of these mortal bodies are also sustained by Christ's control of disease and of the field of nature and

especially of the realm of death, asserted in the preceding quotations and gloriously attested in the raising of Jairus' daughter, of the widow of Nain's son, and above all of Lazarus, already dead four days. Martha, with the faith doubtless of many truly religious Jews, declares concerning the dead Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Her declaration is followed at once by Jesus' statement, "I am the resurrection, and the life." He illuminates with these words his teachings in the fifth and sixth chapters of John's Gospel. It would greatly aid in strengthening these impressions if one were to review here all the significant "I am's" in this Gospel.

Let us also dwell upon our Lord's statement to those gathered about the grave of Lazarus, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Whatever by grace we may here and now apprehend in these words, we shall without doubt continue through the ages of eternity to appreciate more and more that God's glory is peculiarly revealed in resurrection power.

We have thus seen that the doctrine of the resurrection runs as a mighty undercurrent through the Old Testament Scriptures; that Jesus treated death as completely and naturally

under his dominion as every part of the realm of nature; that he spoke frequently and with the utmost plainness of his coming death and resurrection; and that his reiterated statements made no impression upon his disciples.

Thus without fellowship or the sympathy of any but Mary of Bethany who anointed him for his burial, our Lord went to his crucifixion. The blow fell, the Shepherd was smitten and the sheep were scattered as prophesied.

We now approach the crucial event in the history of the ages, the time when Jesus looked and there was none to help and he wondered that there was none to uphold, wherefore his own arm brought salvation (Isa. 63), and so he entered the realms of death forsaken of his familiar friends and forsaken of God because he was bearing the sins of the world. What inconceivable agony was his, but what terror laid hold of Satan and the children of the pit as the Righteousness of God was manifested there where the Word had never even been spoken and where holiness was abhorred! As true righteousness is ever by its very nature aggressive where sin exists, so when he rose he led captivity captive and brought gifts unto men, triumphant over Satan, sin, and death! And who was this mighty conqueror but that same Jesus who but recently was mockingly invested

by his enemies with a crown of thorns, clothed by Herod with a purpureal robe, a reed in his regal right hand in contempt of his kingly claims, blindfolded, smitten, and spit upon, while on the cross they proclaimed to the world the futility of his claim to kingship! Thus, single-handed, in the midst of the vast hordes of evil, he took those mocking symbols, converted them into reality, and made good his claims to be the Son of God, Son of man and man's Redeemer, King of kings, and Lord of lords. The mighty Conqueror rose again holding in his hands the keys of hell and of death, symbols of their broken power.

A woman bore him; blessed be the name of Mary among women.

A woman sat at his feet, learned of him, knew his resurrection power, and anointed him for his burial; blessed be the name of Mary of Bethany.

A woman mourning his death came to do honor to his body and was the first to discover the absence of his body and to learn of his resurrection and to carry the news to the world; blessed be the memory of Mary Magdalene.

Do the Gospels anywhere record greater honors than these?

Thus in the culmination of the ages was the King's highway opened up by a man in his

corporeal though transformed body going before us to the realms of glory and to the very throne of God. He first passed over this great royal road and left his footprints to guide all who would follow him in the Way.

Clear evidences of the resurrection are:

The fact that it was utterly unexpected by the disciples and that their astonishment was great (Luke 24:4).

It is constantly certified by the disciples who saw and companied with our Lord after his resurrection (Acts).

By the evidences of his power over death (during his earthly life).

By the transformation wrought in his disciples once assured of it and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

By his eating and drinking with them after rising from the dead (Luke 24:41; John 21:13; Acts 10:41).

By all the blessed results flowing out over the world through the following centuries.

As we turn from the last chapters of the Gospels to Acts and the Epistles, we become conscious of a new and mighty unknown force released and at work in the world. So evident is this that even the unbelieving world has testi-

fied to its presence ever since Christ's departure, while at the same time there has been one continuous futile series of efforts of that unbelieving world to discover a substitute for it.

Permit a brief digression upon the words "power" and "dynamic" so often in men's mouths. The history of real continuous power among men began with the cross of Christ and his resurrection. The world worships power and rejoices over every fresh material manifestation of it.

But this mere material power, always sooner or later exploited by Satan, is the ruin of those who use it forgetting the Spirit of God. A brilliant example of this was seen in the recent war, the most destructive in the world's history. The history of unregenerate men has ever been that of a feverish search for a method of regenerating the world without God. Centuries before we had dreamed of these recently released powers on which we declare our civilization depends, Christ appeared proclaiming the true power of God, manifested in a surcease of sorrow and care and all the ills that sin has brought into the world.

At the beginning of his ministry, John announces, "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." But won-

derful as were his life and teachings, the power was not vested in them, for in the midst of them did he not declare "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished"? (Luke 12:50.) "Straitened" calls to my mind a mummy wrapped in innumerable bandages and enclosed in its carton. Then came the death on the cross; then having overcome death by resurrection and, leaving the chrysalis of the cerements behind, "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28). So while blind men continued groping for power, it has long since been shed abroad for all who would use it, even this "mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places."

The single grain of corn fell into the ground, died, and sprang up to produce other fruitful corn and to go on increasing until the whole earth shall in the end be filled with its fruitfulness. So, possessors of this mighty power and rejoicing with an exceeding great joy, his disciples have gone forth to overthrow Satan's power in the world ever since that Lord's Day

so many centuries ago when in its supreme effort the power of the enemy was destroyed and the Kingdom of God was set up with power. The first outflowings and distributions of this irresistible power are recorded in the Acts and the Epistles, together with the rules for the use and control of the power house as contained in the Biblical record. The promise is that it is destined utterly to subvert the kingdom of evil. Let all who use it ever bear in mind that its ultimate source is God's great loving heart. The power of his resurrection is evident everywhere in the Acts from Peter's first sermon at Pentecost (where the resurrection is mentioned four times) all the way through to Paul's sojourn in Rome.

In the Epistle to the Romans Paul speaks of God's Son, Jesus Christ, born of Mary, "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

As with so many of the great doctrines of our faith, one fuller statement is found in 1 Corinthians, fifteenth chapter, wherein is shown the futility of all our faith in Christ apart from his bodily resurrection, as well as the fact that his rising from the dead was a firstfruits and the guarantee of our resurrection. The fashion

of the new body is that "it is raised in incorruption . . . it is raised a spiritual body" (see also Phil. 3:20).

With such a superabundance of evidence before us, why should we question or doubt? "Fear not, only believe." We have seen that both Scriptures are the Word of God, speaking by mediators and coming himself to speak to us upon earth; that they both declare the resurrection of these mortal bodies from the dead, "Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's at his coming." If these things are thus beyond peradventure, I am not anxious to inquire why or how, but gladly leave such questions to the realm of faith. I am not seeking to be wise beyond what is written when I anticipate that Christ and all his risen followers will ever constitute a new order of beings in the heavenly realms; that we shall ever be known and identified to angels and archangels as those who have been redeemed from the power of sin. That in this new creation by resurrection power God's honor has been fully vindicated and his great love manifested. That in us that which is material has been glorified and shown worthy of him. Are not all these things "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the

eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord''? (Eph. 3.) Do not these thoughts at least suggest answers to the why? And is not the how abundantly answered by nature every springtide when the seeds dropped into the earth and buried under the snows and ice of winter are quickened into new life and rise transformed and glorified from earth's bosom? Is the resurrection a greater miracle than this order of nature, or has familiarity dulled our vision?

We must bring this fruitful theme to a close with this consideration. All the teaching about the resurrection, however correct, is as nothing unless it means something to me in my daily life, for all the doctrines of the Bible and its teachings are practical in their ultimate analysis.

What then does the resurrection mean to me?

A clear hope vested in my risen Saviour which I could not have, had Christ never risen from the dead.

My justification before the bar of eternal justice so that I shall not come into judgment, through Christ's victory over death.

My inclusion from henceforth among the witnesses of his resurrection.

My burial with Christ, my resurrection with him, and my life's interests henceforth in seeking those things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

My Father's gift of his Holy Spirit to guide me on my earthly pilgrimage and the fulfilment of John 7:38, 39.

Christ's power manifested in this earthly life (compare Acts 4:33 and Phil. 3:11).

The promise, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:5).

My marriage to the risen Christ, thus enabled to bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4).

Let us sanctify our Lord's Day, week by week, jealously guarding its privileges and making each one a memorial feast of his victory over death as attested by his resurrection.

VII

THE LORD'S RETURN

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I SAW somewhere recently an admirable statement which I summarize.

Far back at the opening of our era, two great social organizations sprang into being: one was the Roman Empire and the other was Christianity. The Empire was rooted in the Greek and Persian Empires preceding it, by force of arms, won favor by its earthly splendor, and was not without its gods and goddesses and a justly celebrated code of laws. It had also its earthly head, the emperor who was deified and actually worshiped. Its legal enactments were the elaboration of the three fundamental sound maxims basic in our own laws today, *alterum non lædere, suum cuique tribuere, honeste vivere* (Do thy fellow no harm, give every man his due, live honestly). The kingdom, perpetuated by force and based upon positive law, took no cognizance of any inward spiritual man, but demanded outward conformity only.

The advent of the second Kingdom, on the contrary, was without violence and observation; in place of the clash of arms and the shouts of the spoilsmen over their prey, its

gentle King came fulfilling a prophecy, seven hundred and fifty years old, declaring his method and his final triumph. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."

The Heaven-sent ruler of this second Kingdom, by the deliberate acts of the civil and religious rulers, was quickly slain and left his Kingdom, as the world thought, broken beyond repair, thus inaugurating the age-long warfare between them and demonstrating their utter incompatibility one with another. These two kingdoms had nothing whatever in common but the claim of each to universality. Both remained to be tested, the one finally chosen and the other rejected.

The Roman Kingdom quickly exhausted its possibilities and went to seed, having nothing further to offer; Christ's Kingdom, without a visible throne, continues growing through the ages and manifesting its life in the midst of all other earthly kingdoms, regenerating lost humanity wherever received,—the one Kingdom of which all the subjects are loyal.

The kingdom of the world appeals to the head alone, the heavenly, makes its appeal primarily to the heart. The first ever ignoring the sec-

ond is busy continually refashioning and readjusting its laws and, ever just on the eve of perfecting itself and humanity, never draws any nearer to the goal. The heavenly Kingdom declares that the cause of earth's failure lies not in the laws, but in the corrupt human nature which makes the laws and then adjudicates them;—as one has said long ago, "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." The kings of the first were innumerable by reason of their mortal infirmity; the second yields its allegiance to its unseen King, the Lord of Glory who has promised to return to resume his throne upon earth and to rule the world, and upon this grand finale depends the promised victory of the second Kingdom, apart from which there remains no hope but sin and death, hatred, wars and destruction and utter misery to the end.

The Christian Bible is the code of laws of the second or spiritual Kingdom; let us see, therefore, what it has to say about the return of this King slain so long ago.

Let me note as I begin that this truth regarding the return of our Lord to reign in person here upon earth is variously held by our fellow Christians with major and minor differences. As a rule, in our common orthodox churches it is not often referred to, or if at all

with considerable uncertainty and diffidence, in spite of the fact that the most ancient creed of the church clearly proclaims that "He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose Kingdom shall have no end." While the Episcopal Church at the very beginning of the year has an advent Sunday consecrated by a glorious collect and Sunday by Sunday reminds her worshipers in their fellowship and service that as often as they partake of the communion of the body and blood of Christ they "do shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26), the note of triumphant expectation is not often heard outside of these formal statements, nor does this particular doctrine seem to react seriously upon any considerable number of her members as a controlling influence in their daily lives.

Part of the diversity in Christendom relates, however, not so much to the fact of Christ's coming as to the time; unfortunately these opposing views have had to be labeled with special names which react as usual as fixatives and a hindrance to the entrance of the truth wherever it may lie. There are, for example, those who believe that there will be a thousand years of peace upon earth (the millennium, Rev. 20:2-7), but do not expect Christ to return to reign until the thousand years have passed,—these are

called postmillenarians; others, often called adventists or premillenarians, or in the older writings chiliasts (Greek *chilia,* a thousand), look daily for our Lord's return to inaugurate his blessed reign upon earth and purge the world at once of all iniquity; again others even continue to venture to fix a date for his coming, as on numerous occasions in the past.

It is my own belief that the New Testament teaches us clearly that he has been likely to return at any moment ever since his departure and that it is the privilege of the Church, the expectant bride, to stand upon the watch-tower scanning the horizon for signs of his near approach while ever holding herself in readiness to welcome him. It is my privilege here to submit my reasons to those who will consider them.

My earnest request, surely not a troublesome one in view of the importance of the matter, is that anyone who has not reached an unalterable conviction on this head will first con the two sets of references in the Old Testament to the coming of the Deliverer, one set the most numerous setting forth his advent with power and great glory to establish his Kingdom on earth, the other not at a first inspection so obvious but still equally definite, proclaiming a Messiah destined to be persecuted, and to suffer death

as a sin-bearer. I indicate here several of these Old Testament passages referring to the Messiah's humiliation: They are found in all the sacrifices, in the Passover lamb and in the book of Leviticus; abundantly in Joseph's prophetic life, a beautiful type of our Lord, the deliverer of his people; they are seen in the twenty-second Psalm; indeed, throughout the entire book of Psalms he is ever in mind; most clearly in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; and in the prophecies of Zechariah. Next take the New Testament, blue pencil in hand, and read it through, marking a capital "A" (Advent) in the margin wherever you find Christ's return to earth is clearly referred to. You will also discover more places to mark on a later reading which you pass over in the first, if you come to expect his near return. In this way, the Bible speaks most effectively for itself, and I do not ask more than this of anyone.

An important caution: Study with prayer and resolve by the grace given you and by virtue of your claim to saintship in Christ never to let any convictions you may reach in this or any kindred matter gender spiritual pride, a sense of manifest superiority over those fellow Christians who do not hold with you,—a pride, alas, too common and one of Satan's snares for the unwary. Another caution: Do not rate this

to be the sole subject of vital importance before the Christian world today. The matter ever of highest import in an unconverted world is the death of the Son of God on the cross for our sins, the just for the unjust, that we may escape from the hands of the destroyer and receive life and immortality, and our obligation to bring this home to the hearts of all men. Closely and inseparably connected with this foundation truth follow Christ's bodily resurrection, his ascension to the Father's throne, and then his return again to reign upon earth,—an unbroken chain of great doctrines; yet the first, if we may differentiate, ever of primary importance. I write obviously to those who accept the Bible as God's authoritative Word, for apart from the Bible where are we to look for any knowledge of things spiritual and especially of those yet to come? There is no argument either for or against Christ's coming again apart from the Bible.

Our plan of examination will then be (1) after a passing reference to the Old Testament, (2) to consider the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles—with 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, as the central point, and Revelation, and (3) finally to state what such a doctrine must mean to me in my daily life.

The Old Testament begins with the prophecy

to Eve in the garden, proclaiming everywhere the great and final warfare between good and evil with the assurance of the ultimate complete triumph of righteousness in him of whom it is declared, "It [the seed of the woman] shall bruise thy [the serpent's] head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It reveals God himself at war with sin and Satan its author in the shout, "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name"! It seems clear to me that the Old Testament prophecies were understood in a general way by the godly Jew as we understand them today, only they left him puzzled as to the apparent dual personality of his Messiah. One way he adopted to solve his difficulty was to declare that there must be two Messiahs, a suffering Messiah of whom Joseph in Egypt is a clear type, called Messiah Ben (son of) Joseph, and a Messiah Ben Solomon coming to occupy his glorious throne like Solomon. How easy the solution now that we know of Christ's two advents, one fulfilling the Scriptures to suffer and the other completing them to reign. It is ever a fruitful study to distinguish more and more clearly these contrasting types throughout the Jewish Scriptures.

With the two comings of one and the same person in mind, let us turn to one of the Gospels, Luke for example. The presentation to

earth of a King ready to rule if welcomed was a *bona fide* offer, so we must not expect, as indeed we do not find, any declarations as to a second coming designed to influence conduct until his rejection is assured. On the other hand, with his rejection obviously at hand, as the end drew near, he then began with the utmost plainness to predict his coming death and resurrection and in those emphatic final discourses to dwell upon the end of the present age and his coming again: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Matt. 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21). Luke seems perhaps fuller of this thought than Matthew and Mark, so I cite him. First of all the promise to Mary (1:32), "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David," must be understood in the New as in the Old Testament to be the promise of an earthly kingdom only possible now of fulfillment by his return to reign on earth. John the Baptist preached first, and then Christ preached, a Kingdom of God come unto men, but sin and Satan hindered it for a time. Does not then the very dignity of Christ's person and do not these unmistakable proclamations demand his return once more in the fullness of time to take unto himself the earthly Kingdom his Father gave him, a Kingdom now

more than ever assured by his death, his glorious resurrection, his triumphal ascension, and his session at the right hand of the Majesty on high?

Following the clear recognition of his deity by the disciples (Matt. 16, Mark 8, Luke 9), Jesus at once began a new teaching and training of his followers, and in each of these Gospels warns them of the folly of throwing away their lives for the things of this world, and points to the final award, when the Son of man "shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." In Luke (12:16-48) due preparedness for his unexpected coming is pictured in parables, in strong contrast to the rich fool who gave his whole life to the acquisition of riches, and with warnings to the servants who forgot about his return.

I recall an interesting incident connected with this passage. It took place at Northfield about in the late nineties when Dwight L. and Mrs. Moody were wont to invite ministers and a few other guests to their home after the evening service in the Auditorium. Conversation then ranged over a diversity of topics; on the particular occasion Moody addressed this question to each one present, "Do you think the Lord is likely to come back soon?" One after another declared he did not think he would. Then

Moody read from Luke 12:40, "Be ye therefore ready also: for *the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*"

Here, also, showing how frequently our Lord must have dealt with this matter, read the parables of the virgins waiting for the bridegroom, and of the talents entrusted to his servants until their Lord's return, and include Matthew 24 and Mark 14:1-12. Could last teachings possibly be plainer or more emphatic than these? It is good to memorize Mark 13:34-37. Suppose we unite one and all in an informal band called the Gregoreite (Greek for "watch") Society, taking for our motto these last four verses of Mark 13, where the word appears three times; keep awake and watch—watch—watch!

Again dare we ask for a clearer testimony than the comfort words, so often repeated, of John 14? "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." And yet its one great purpose frequently overlooked is, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again,* and receive you unto myself." So likewise at the end of the Gospel, in the appendix as it were, we hear our Lord's answer to Peter's inquiry about John's death, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me."

In Acts, chapter one, we see the disciples straining their gaze heavenward following their vanishing Lord as he is caught up into the clouds. There they might easily have been led to erect a tabernacle on the very spot and to spend their lives in contemplative reveries on the beatific vision of his return, but "Two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? *This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven,*" and in effect implied "take this rapture of your Lord as a source of power and go out into the wide world and work for him until he returns." Acts is the book of the busy-ness of the disciples on earth as they at once proceeded to proclaim the message of the coming of the Prince of Peace, and God's mercy to repentant sinners through Christ crucified and risen.

The one epistle in the New Testament, by pre-eminence meriting the title of "The Book of the Second Coming," is that one which was in all probability the very first to be written, namely, First Thessalonians. Passing over the numerous (one might almost say innumerable) passages elsewhere in the New Testament, let me cite some from this ever fresh and early writing as convincing and conclusive as

to the extreme importance of the doctrine at a time when the Bible was not as yet completed, and when those various writings which now form the Canon of the New Testament Scriptures were being penned under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit. Note here the emphatic statement of chapter four, verse fifteen, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord."

In chapter one, the Thessalonians have "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And *to wait for his Son from heaven.*"

In chapter two, at the end, the Thessalonian believers are Paul's hope and joy and crown of rejoicing "*in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.*"

Chapter three ends with "To the end that he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*"

Chapter four contains the fullest of all the statements in the Bible and is the very heart of this great doctrine; here Paul declares that "*We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep.* For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the

dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be *caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*" Study this passage carefully and rather radiate from it into other parts of the New Testament.

This coming again is also an occasion for judging the saints for their rewards for service and concerning their opportunities utilized in their earthly pilgrimage (see 1 Cor. 3:11-15). We work not for the rewards themselves but because only in this way can we best serve him who has called us to share his Kingdom and glory. Let it be noted that the saints never come into judgment as to their salvation, for that depends wholly upon Christ's work and was settled on Calvary, thus giving them entire assurance and boldness.

The final blessing in chapter five is, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body *be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" So every chapter in this ancient letter has its clear-ringing advent message.

Would this matter be made clearer or more certain by multiplying quotations? I trow not. Let us be of the wise and range ourselves with

those who continually seek grace to purify their lives (1 John 3:2, 3) in view of this greatest event in all the future, as we are found "looking for that *blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*" (Tit. 2:13), so that "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4).

One master word covers the attitude of Christians in relation to this expectation of the coming of the Bridegroom to claim his Bride, and that word is "*imminent.*" Ever since our Lord passed beyond the confines of this earth into the heavens, from the time of that first generation he left behind him down to our own present one, the hour of his return all unknown has been imminent, and our right attitude, therefore, is one of constant expectancy, with hearts fully prepared to give our King his fitting royal welcome when he appears, no longer as a sin-bearer but with the holy angels and in his heavenly glory.

Surely we may rest in the conclusion that it is eminently fitting, and that the very circumstances of his humiliation demand his return in power and glory to earth, the scene of his rejection, literally and personally to fulfil such plain and oft-reiterated statements.

It has always struck me that skepticism as to

Christ's coming again to reign in person this second time was really tantamount to a denial of the reality of his first coming, and if such declarations as these are duly considered and rejected we only open the way to a light treatment of all the other plain teachings of the Scriptures. I believe that the doctrine of the immediate return of Christ is unpopular with the clergy, because it is so often associated with such strange vagaries and treated as a shibboleth. To the laity it too often becomes a matter of indifference relegated to the realm of curious speculations and strange sects due to their lamentable ignorance of the Bible.

The practical side of the acceptance of this doctrine is that the Church, rightly reading her Lord's plans, will not then seek to defend her obvious failure to convert the world and bring on the millennium which drives her into the false position of laboring to show that this wicked and godless world has been undergoing constant improvement for the past nineteen hundred years.

Just here arises the much mooted question of optimism and pessimism, and this I think is a case in which these terms need reversal. I merely cite them, however, as popular terms, for I myself am neither optimist nor pessimist, but simply a plain Christian who seeks to know

the truth and to have grace to be led by it. The worldly Christian, however, proclaims me a pessimist because I venture to declare that the flood of evil in the world is so great that I expect Christ's return at any moment to overthrow it utterly, fulfilling the prophecy of the second Psalm. He on the other hand claims to be an optimist who views the world as ever growing better, and that, too, in spite of all evidence. Now for my part I insist, if we are to use these names for the moment, that the Christian who momentarily expects his Lord to arrive to end all evil and establish his Kingdom is the greatest of all optimists; while those who would end evil by the progressive betterment of the world until it is good enough to invite his return show the most distressing pessimism imaginable. For, to clinch the argument, if it has taken nineteen hundred years to advance to our present state of wickedness, how many tens of thousands more must the world move at such a rate until he comes?

What, then, does this truth, far more precious than all our boasted science, mean to me?

It is the greatest of all future historic events.

It is the coming of the heavenly bridegroom for the Church, his bride.

It calls upon the bride to have herself in readiness for his return.

He that hath this hope in him purifies himself accordingly, even as he is pure.

It reveals the world's future clearly, and as utterly diverse from the common expectation of a social and moral improvement which has ever failed to materialize.

It means the engagement of all my efforts to win individuals to Christ rather than to effect any wholesale social regeneration of nations.

It tests daily my standing before him: Do I really want him to come back and judge his saints now?

It stimulates efforts to hasten the time of his return by bringing men to Christ in hopes of completing the tale (if there be such) of those who are saved.

It means as one meets the flood of sin in the world the constant heart cry, "O Lord, how long must we wait? We pray thee, hasten the time of thy return."

The Church has been battling with sin on earth for nineteen hundred years, lonely and ever longing for her departed Lord, even while blessed, cheered, and upheld by his vicegerent, the Holy Spirit. Is she to have some inkling of his coming when the time draws near? I believe it. But while waiting and longing here on earth what vision is vouchsafed her to strengthen faith and to serve as an antidote to

disappointed expectation? I turn here to quote some final paragraphs from an admirable poem by Dr. Henry W. Frost, "The Nazarene" (The Sunday School Times Co., 40 cents), which every Christian should read. It is the life of the apostle John, as he reviews it in his last days, ending with his vision at Patmos of our Lord in glory as recorded in the first chapter of Revelation.

I longed as I once longed in Galilee
That God would rend the heavens and come down,
E'en in the person of our Lord, the Christ;
For now I knew who only could give rest
And turn to calm earth's sinfulness and strife,
Healing its blood-red wounds and giving men,
Instead of fratricide, the tasks of peace,
With love to keep that peace through time unmarred;—
And then I fell upon my face and prayed.

How long I lay outstretched upon the ground
I do not know; but this I would declare
That suddenly I heard an angel's voice,
Which cried aloud, till all the heaven heard:—
"Behold the Lion of great Juda's tribe!"
At which I looked to see high heaven's King,
And lo, a Lamb, as if it had been slain;
The Lamb of whom the prophet, John, had told,
The Lamb whom we saw die on Calvary's cross,
Jesus, the Son of Man, our Nazarene,
But now transfigured, crowned with many crowns,
All bright and glorious, clothed with dazzling light,
Himself the light and lighting heaven's expanse:
Upon His person was a long white robe,
And on His breast a girdle, golden bright,

His head and hairs were white as wool, as snow,
His eyes were full of fire, a flashing flame,
His feet were like to brass when well refined,
His face was like the sun which shines in strength,
His voice was like to waters, full and sweet,
Yet like a sword, two-edged and very sharp:—
The throne on which He sat was all of gold,
And underneath it was a sea of glass,
While o'er it hung a bow of emerald green,
And fixt before it burned seven golden lamps,
And issuing from it vivid lightnings flashed,
And mighty thunderings came, which shook the heavens;
And then I saw that, raised upon the throne,
Four living creatures stood, each one with wings,
And full of piercing eyes, before, behind,
Who praisefully, not resting day nor night,
Cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord,
Who was, who is, and who is yet to come!"
While, in an outer circle, on their thrones,
Sat four and twenty elders, clothed in white,
Who joined the living creatures, crying out:—
"O Lord, our God, Thou art the worthy One;
"To Thee alone be glory, honor, might;
"For Thou createdst all things, and for Thee
"And for Thy pleasure everything was made!"
At which the living creatures said, "Amen!"
And all the elders, worshiping, fell down,
And cast their crowns of gold before the throne:—
My little children, when I saw that One
My strength all failed me and I fell as dead;
I, who in olden days had handled Him,
I, who had laid my head upon His breast;
And there as dead I ever should have lain
Had not the Voice I knew in Galilee
Spake, as of old, its "Fear not!" to my soul,
Had not the Hand, bearing its sacred sign,
Raised me to stand beside Him by the throne;
And as I stood, I heard the Voice cry out:—

"I am the first, and I the very last,
"Alpha, Omega, the beginning, end;
"Who once was dead; who is the Living One;
"Who bears the keys of death and lowest hell!"

From thence, my children, from that very hour,
The old-time mystery was wholly past;
For now I knew, as not in days of yore,
That our misunderstanding of the Word
Was not so much in matter as in time,
And that we did not wrong to look and wait
For One who should be more than Son of Man,
For One who should be more than very God,
But with His royal garments laid aside,
His only crown a crown of piercing thorns,
His only throne the cruel, cursed cross;
Ay, now at last, the vision had made plain
That Jesus only laid His glory by
For little while, that He might walk with us,
For little while, that He might speak with us,
For little while, that He might die for us,
And that He died on Calvary's shameful cross
That He might reign on earth, its rightful King;
So, then, beloved, He will come with clouds
And every eye shall see Him as He comes,
And He, the Lamb, will reign as King of kings
O'er all the earth, and will make all things new!

And now my conclusion is, having thus been permitted to see my Lord rise up to Heaven, assured that he represents me there, and having also been transported to Heaven and seen his glorious person there, though the Lamb that had been slain, yet King of kings and Lord of lords, all glorious and admired of all the powers

of angels and of saints and honored by the Father, I no longer look impatiently for his return, but join that heavenly throng, submissive to his will, and gladly awaiting his return at such a season as shall once more constitute the fulness of the times for the establishment of his Kingdom here on earth.

My little children, let us keep this beatific vision ever before us and ever love one another as we walk our earthly way in paths of blessed service in his name.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

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